Dudley
CHRONICLE

Thursday, October 19, 2017 | Read by more than 62,000 people | Price when sold 70p

Council vehicle aims to keep pupils safe outside gates

80 FINED AS CAR SPIES ON SCHOOLS

Report By Clare Butler

EIGHTY fines have been handed out in just one month since a school parking spy car hit the streets in Dudley borough.

The car is fitted with mobile CCTV and has just completed its first month full service keeping children safer outside schools.

It is designed to deter people from parking on yellow 'keep-clear' zigzag lines outside school gates.

Legislation means it is an offence to stop anywhere on the lines, punishable by a £70 fine. The zones are designed to make the busy areas outside schools safer for children.

Karen Shakespeare

More than 80 penalty notices have been handed out since the car took to the streets in September.

Technology

The car, which was already one of the council's fleet of vehicles, has been kitted out with smart technology.

Using Google Maps and GPS, it senses when a vehicle has been driven into an area with the yellow zigzag lines and starts recording. It stops when the car leaves the area, capturing the number plates of all those parked illegally.

The car was deployed outside several schools in June and July as part of a pilot project but has been rolled out across the whole borough since pupils started back with the new term in September.

The project is costing £60,000 to set up and aims to be self-financing, meaning the cost of running the scheme will be funded by the income from fines.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, the council's cabinet member for environmental services, said: "Illegal parking outside schools puts the lives of children at risk. The yellow zigzag lines are designed to keep the road clear so that children can see and be seen. People who flout the law and ignore the zigzags will be fined."

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MALI THE CHIMP IS BERRY HAPPY AT THE ZOO

Mali enjoying her blackberry feast – the Dudley Zoo chimpanzee loves the berries harvested from the zoo's grounds on Castle Hill

MALI the chimpanzee posed for the camera as she wolfed down some juicy autumnal treats at Dudley Zoo.

The attraction's seven female chimpanzees have been tucking into delicious blackberries, freshly picked by keepers from bushes around the site on Castle Hill.

And 23-year-old Mali didn't waste any time in tucking into the feast. Seasonal produce is always on the menu for the 200 different animal species at the Black Country attraction laid out around the town's medieval castle.

It's not just the chimpanzees who are getting their five a day. Keepers recently discovered that a rhino iguana, named Jane, couldn't wait to munch her favourite food when keepers delivered her breakfast. The seven year-old lizard, a creature found in the Caribbean, has a particular fondness for peppers and always picks over the vegetables in her food bowl to pick out the sweet tasting peppers to enjoy first.

Senior Keeper Sam Grov, said: "Jane will always eat the peppers first, it doesn't matter what colour they are or where they are in the bowl, she'll root through the other vegetables to find them and they're gone in a flash."

POLITICS

Move to scrap MP's constituency

DUDLEY'S electoral boundaries could drastically change under plans announced this week. The Boundary Commission has unveiled proposals to cut the number of MPs from 650 to 600 by carving up hundreds of constituencies.

Under the plans a new Dudley constituency will include three quarters of the Dudley South seat held by Conservative MP Mike Wood. Labour MP Ian Austin's Dudley North seat would be abolished, with parts going into a new Wolverhampton South and Coseley. St Thomas's, currently in Dudley North, would go to Warley.

STORM

Ophelia causes roof to collapse

A BUILDING'S roof collapsed in Quarry Bank as the Black Country was lashed by the fringe of Hurricane Ophelia, which brought widespread destruction to Ireland on Monday.

Brierley Hill firefighters were called out to Quarry Bank's High Street after the gable end of a terraced building collapsed. The property includes nine flats above a shop with one occupant having to move out for the night.

TRAFFIC

Upgrading signals to ease congestion

A SCHEME to upgrade traffic lights on busy routes across the Dudley borough in a bid to cut congestion has been revealed.

Signals are to be improved along Duncan Edwards Way and Stourbridge Road, near Scotts Green Island, at High Oak, Pensnett. and near Cinder Bank after Dudley Council secured funding.

INSIDE

EVERYONE GOES CRAZY FOR TOM

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Hospital failing to meet A&E targets

ONE in five A&E patients are waiting more than four hours to be seen at Russells Hall Hospital, latest figures show. Just 80 per cent of patients were seen within four hours in August – below the national NHS target of 95 per cent.

The findings comes amid warnings of a looming winter care crisis at the Dudley hospital and across the wider NHS.

Chiefs at Dudley Council called the figures 'extremely disappointing' but said there was no 'overnight solution'. Hospital bosses also pointed to the development of a new emergency treatment centre to relieve pressure on A&E.

The number of patients seen within four hours dropped from July, when the figure was 82 per cent. In June the figure had been 90 per cent.

Councillor Nicholas Barlow, cabinet member for adult social care, said: "We are already worried about what winter will bring.

"These are very disappointing figures. The problem is there is a shortage of nurses right across the board.

Safely

"Dudley Council and our NHS partners are coming together looking at ways to reduce hospital admissions. There is not an overnight solution. Sometimes the Government puts in targets that are not realistic. The hospital staff are doing an excellent job who make sure people are seen as quickly and safely as possible."

NHS trust bosses announced plans in the summer for a £2.6 million Emergency Medical Centre, which is due to open next month.

Diane Wake, chief executive of the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We always do our best to make sure patients attending our emergency department are seen as quickly as possible and continue to see, treat, admit or discharge the vast majority of patients within four hours.

"Our combined performance in August for all types of emergency attendances, which is measured as part of the national four-hour target, was 87.2 per cent. Patients are always prioritised in order of clinical need to make sure that acutely unwell patients receive the urgent medical attention they require as soon as possible."

She added that the hospital worked to ensure patients received 'safe and appropriate care at all times'.

Mother lied over living arrangements to get benefit

A BENEFITS cheat from Sedgley fraudulently claimed nearly £29,000 in three years, a court heard.

Wolverhampton Crown Court was told that mother-of-four Samantha Turner, of Downfield Drive, netted £28,465.39 in Jobseeker's Allowance, housing benefit, council tax benefit and income support between November 2012 and January 2016.

She had told authorities that her husband had moved out and she was the sole earner, saying her husband was living with his father but when quizzed by investigators Turner's father-in-law said he had lived alone for more than a decade.

Mr Richard Davenport, prosecuting, said: "These offences came to light in 2016 after information was received, but after she had ceased to claim."

Turner had claimed her relationship with her husband 'was volatile and he often left for long periods', which meant she 'couldn't rely on him financially and claimed benefits as a safety net', he said.

Miss Kam Shergill, defending, said her 33-year-old client was of previous good character.

Recorder Paul Bleasdale QC ordered Turner to carry out 180 hours of unpaid work having pleaded guilty to the three counts of fraud by false representation.

Shop boss sold fake famous name trainers

A SHOE shop boss has admitted selling fake Nike and Adidas trainers from his High Street store.

A sting operation at GP Footwear WM, in High Street, Dudley, found boxes full of fake trainers with a street value of more than £60,000.

Trading Standards officers confiscated a total of 602 pairs of trainers from the shop and sought to convict boss Sukhwant Singh, of Fancourt Avenue, Wolverhampton.

At Wolverhampton Magistrates Court, the 54-year-old admitted two counts of selling falsely branded trainers and two of possessing such goods.

He was given a curfew order which means he has to stay at home between 7pm and 7am.

He was also ordered to pay a £1,000 fine, £1,800 costs and an £85 victim surcharge. The court ordered him to pay the £2,885 total within 14 days.

Message

Genuine branded trainers would cost between £50 and £170, but the counterfeit trainers were being sold at the shop for between £20 and £40.

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member responsible for trading standards at Dudley Council, said: "This sends out a clear message that we will do everything we can to protect the public and legitimate businesses from fake goods.

"Often these counterfeit products are poorly made which short changes the customer.

"We will always prosecute those people who operate above the law and hoodwink the general public," added Councillor Miller.

GP Footwear WM is no longer trading in Dudley.

The Wright idea for Bev and Lenny

Beverley Knight celebrates her London show with family and friends including Sir Lenny Henry and Ian Wright

BLACK Country soul star Beverley Knight is beaming as she enjoys being back on tour – and enjoying a post-show cuppa with Sir Lenny Henry and former Arsenal and England footballer Ian Wright.

The Wolverhampton singer has returned to the stage over the past few weeks following recent health issues which led to a hysterectomy.

She showed she was on fine form during a performance at London's Palladium Theatre on Friday night as part of her I Love Soulsville tour.

And she was joined by family and friends along with some famous faces backstage to celebrate.

She posted pictures on Twitter posing with the Dudley-born actor and comedian and also the football pundit. She tweeted: "So amazing having my family and friends by my side on Friday at the @PalladiumLondon Love you guys!"

It has been a busy few weeks for the soul queen from Penn, who had a gig at Symphony Hall in Birmingham and will be returning to the West Midlands as one of the panto stars at Birmingham Hippodrome.

Inspectors gave school kitchen a score of zero

A SECONDARY school in Dudley was ordered to take immediate action by food inspectors who uncovered poor cleaning standards in its kitchen, which had no hot water on the day of inspection, earlier this year.

There was no food safety management system in place when hygiene experts visited Ellowes Hall Sports College, in Lower Gornal, in March. As a result it received a hygiene rating of zero.

Bin lids presented potential 'cross contamination' risks, said Dudley Council inspectors who ordered them to be removed. The standard of cleaning in the kitchen was described as 'poor' with cobwebs and flaky paintwork within food preparation or storage areas,

School leaders were told staff needed to be trained how to operate a food safety management system, despite one being requested for the school by hygiene chiefs two years earlier.

Ellowes Hall, which has around 1,000 pupils, said its kitchen had since been re-inspected and given a rating of four out of five.

Liberal Democrats, who highlighted the report, described the conditions in March as 'scandalous'.

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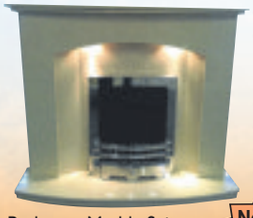

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Tram lines get a fresh lease of life at museum

OLD tram lines ripped up as part of ongoing Midland Metro works will have a new life – at the Black Country Living Museum.

The tracks have been donated to the museum to be included as part of its vintage tram display.

Around 100 metres of tram track have been removed as part of the works which are continuing along the A41 Bilston Road.

They have been donated by company Midland Metro Alliance to the museum to enhance its Forging Ahead project. It will be installed as part of 1930s-inspired street.

Vintage

The donation was made after workers discovered that the rails in Wolverhampton was compatible with the track of the vintage tramway at the Tipton Road tourist attraction.

Paul Brown, Midland Metro Alliance project director for the Bilston Road tproject, said: "Whilst the track along Bilston Road was reaching the end of its operational life for such a busy route, there was still enough life in the track for a smaller vintage tramline."

Black Country Living Museum has announced expansion plans backed by significant financial support from the National Lottery. BCLM: Forging Ahead, will see the museum create a town focused on the1940s to 1960s.

Sneaky peaky at series premiere

THE stars of Peaky Blinders are returning to Birmingham this month for a special premiere ahead of the show's fourth series.

Cillian Murphy, Helen McCrory, Paul Anderson, Packy Lee and others will be on the red carpet at Cineworld Birmingham for a special screening of the first episode of the new series on October 30.

The stars will be joined by creator and director Steven Knight, who was born in Birmingham. They will hold a panel session at the end of the episode for those lucky enough to get tickets.

Fans can register online at www.bbc.co.uk/showsandtours website. The gangster drama was part filmed on location at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley.

New classroom

A DUDLEY school will get a new early years classroom after planners approved an extension. Jesson's Church of England Primary School, in School Street, will build a new classroom, toilet and quiet area.

World's eyes will be on £28m rail hub

DUDLEY 'will punch its weight internationally' with the arrival of a new multi-million pound light rail facility, says the borough's council boss.

Dudley Council leader Councillor Patrick Harley says people from around the world will want to know what's happening at the planned £27.8 million Very Light Railway centre, which will feature 'cutting-edge technology' shaping the future of transport.

A total of 225 jobs and 331 apprenticeships could be created at the facility, which is due to be set to be up and running by 2021.

Plans were recently given a boost with council bosses agreeing to spend £257,000 on 'professional design fees' .

The innovation centre, to be built at Castle Hill, will design and build lightweight rail vehicles.

Research and development laboratories will be built alongside facilities for general manufacturing, conferences, teaching and training and further infrastructure. The hub will also feature a test track

Councillor Harley said: "This is something that has been in the pipeline for quite a while. The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership recently agreed to award us £18 million towards funding this project.

"People all over the world will want to know what we are doing here. We may even be able to manufacture here. It will bring in a lot of high-tech jobs. It is an exciting project.

"It won't just be Dudley punching its weight in the Black Country and the West Midlands, it will be punching internationally. You can't say that very often."

Planning chief and councillor Kieran Casey highlighted how the centre will regenerate the area.

The route of the Very Light Rail test track will run from Castle Hill through Dudley Tunnel before terminating close to Cinder Bank.

The centre and testing track is part of a scheme by Warwick Manufacturing Group, which struck a deal with Dudley Council two years ago.

It forms part of a number of regeneration projects planned for Dudley town centre.

Pair are banned from pubs for seven years

TWO men have been banned from from all licensed premises in parts of Dudley under a civil injunction secured by West Midlands Police.

Kyle Williams, from Yardley, and Daniel Davies, from Dudley, are banned from associating with each other and entering anywhere that sells alcohol in an area defined by police.

Other conditions of the injunction says they can only possess one mobile phone each and must share the IMEI number with police – and they must also call police to notify them about any vehicle they are travelling in.

Daniel Davies

Kyle Williams

Arrest

If any of these conditions are breached, police have the power to arrest them.

Dc Dan Wickenden from Force CID, said: "We applied for the injunction following a series of violent incidents related to drug dealing. We believe Williams and Davies are linked to these events but do not have enough evidence for a criminal prosecution, so the injunction is the next best thing as it allows us to manage their activity and arrest them should they fail to comply.

"Both have been managed by offender managers but refused to engage with intervention programmes or schemes aimed at diverting people away from crime. The injunctions last for seven year and if either are caught breaching any of the conditions they risk being jailed.

"Local officers know who these men are, recognise them on sight, and we will be looking to see if they breach any of the conditions."

These are the latest injunctions as the force works with local authorities to disrupt anti-social activity.

Amy's doble delight on Strictly

Amy and Brian's routine on Strictly Come Dancing on Saturday proved a hit and keeps them in the competition

BLACK Country dancer Amy Dowden and her celebrity partner Brian Conley waltzed through to the next round of Strictly Come Dancing at the weekend.

The 26-year-old from Dudley performed the Paso Doble to I Believe In A Thing Called Love by The Darkness with the comic actor and former Birmingham panto star on Saturday night. The pair's performance kept them out of the bottom two in the public vote, thereby sparing them another the dance-off to stay in the competition.

Judge Bruno Tonioli had dubbed the performance 'punko doble'.

Miss Dowden runs an academy called Art in Motion, which runs classes in Tipton, Wombourne and Great Barr. She moved from Caerphilly in Wales six years ago to Dudley, where she lives with partner Ben Jones in Oakham. Miss Dowden also teaches at Hallfield School in Edgbaston.

Strictly Come Dancing continues on Saturday at 6.35pm.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MP's bid to help emergency crews

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin is backing a bid to introduce tougher sentences for yobs who assault members of the emergency services.

A bill is due to go before Parliament this week aiming to bring greater protection for police officers, paramedics and firefighters.

Labour MP Mr Austin said he is determined to ensure the bill goes through.

He said: "I'll be in Parliament on Friday to make sure the new law goes forward.

"These are brave public servants working to help or protect the rest of us and they deserve our support."

Major junction to close for half-term

A MAJOR junction in Pensnett will be closed over the half-term holiday to carry out essential work.

Dudley Council bosses have announced that Swan Street will be shut at the junction of High Street to enable BT to carry out essential works.

It has been timetabled from October 23 to 27 but the road will open earlier if the works are completed.

It's part of the £6.3 million improvement scheme which will see the road widened along High Street so the road will have two lanes in both directions.

Free service for those facing debt

A SUPPORT group is offering free advice for anyone concerned over bills or growing debts.

The Centre for Equality and Diversity, in Stone Street, Dudley, is offering its free service with money mentor Peter Dyson on hand to help.

He said: "We aim to give help to anyone who is struggling with debt and will meet up with them over a number of weeks if necessary. This will help residents gain control over their finances and budget properly."

Call 07936 576194 or email money mentorscfed@yahoo.co.uk

GP will draw on his experiences for talk

RETIRED Black Country GP and author Dr Edward Cooke is to deliver an illustrated lecture in Dudley next week drawing on his experiences – comic, tragic and macabre – whilst working in the Dudley area.

His talk 'Ferces and Plerces' will be held for the Black Country Society at Dudley Canal Trust's headquarters, The Portal, off Birmingham New Road, on Wednesday, October 25, at 7.30pm. Non-members are welcome.

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COUNTY NEWS

Call for reports on accident hotspots

A FORMER mayor has called for councils to publish details on the number of accidents at spots where speed cameras could be poised to make a return.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson confirmed that he is in talks with Black Country councils around bringing them back.

But former Walsall mayor Peter Smith has issued a word of caution on the move. He said: "Motorists will be suspicious that this is a move to raise money, unless evidence is produced that demonstrates the chosen locations are proven hotspots."

Keith Allen named as Comic Con star

ACTOR, comedian and musician Keith Allen is coming to Birmingham's Comic Con.

The event, at the NEC, will also feature Veronica Taylor, known for voicing the part of Ash Ketchum in Pokémon. Keith is best known for his roles in films Trainspotting, Eddie The Eagle and TV's Robin Hood.

Keith was a member of London punk band Atoms in the late 70s and later Fat Les, a band which also featured artist Damien Hurst and Blur bassist Alex James. Keith will be at Comic Con on both November 18 and 19. Autographs with the star will cost £20, and photo sessions cost £24.

Cat owners alerted over fatal virus

A POTENTIALLY fatal virus has infected cats across the West Midlands. The RSPCA is urging cat owners to get their pets vaccinated.

It comes after vets spotted a rise in stray cats arriving at Birmingham Animal Hospital suffering with feline panleukopenia (FPV). Senior clinician at the hospital Joanna Szkutnicki said: "FPV is a severe disease that can prove fatal. Symptoms can include vomiting, diarrhea, flu-like symptoms, lethargy and also sudden collapse."

Air ambulance lottery has 80,000 backers

AN AIR ambulance charity's lottery has reached 80,000 subscribers and now funds more than 750 missions every year.

Midland Air Ambulance hopes to get 100,000 subscribers for its Lifesaving Lottery. Last year the lottery raised £2.7 million. It needs in excess of £7m a year to operate its three helicopters. To subscribe visit www.midlandsairambulance.com/lottery

Warehouse valued at £450k for auction

AN INDUSTRIAL unit valued at around £450,000 is going up for sale on an online property auction.

It is being hailed as an opportunity for a growing company to gain a foothold in the West Midlands.

The unoccupied 1.5 acre property is Unit 10 on the Gibbons Industrial Park in Kingswinford. The buildings are configured to provide approximately two or three warehouse spaces, with the remaining space comprising of two-storey offices. In total it covers 19,700 sq ft. The property is on the market with a guide price of £400,000 - £450,000 or more.

It is up for auction in an online property auction held by John Pye Property this week.

The sale comes after warnings from the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors that a severe lack of industrial space is a 'major issue' in the West Midlands with less opportunities for businesses to start-up, grow or expand.

Richard Reed, head of property at John Pye Property, said: "This commercial space and immediate vicinity lends itself to industrial use, west of Birmingham and also in close proximity to Wolverhampton and Dudley; there are clear opportunities for international, national and regional companies.

Stars back video firm's charity concert spectacle

By Diane Davies

A-LIST stars Ricky Gervais, Joanna Lumley and Peter Egan have stepped up in support of a Stourbridge production company's one-off unique charity show.

Keyboards supremo Rick Wakeman and international artist Maria Rud are starring in the Over the Moon show, arranged by Stourbridge-based Base Video Productions.

Gervais, Lumley and Egan have all taken part in a new video urging people to support the Over the Moon show which takes place at the spectacular Queen's House in Greenwich, London, on December 10.

Comedian Gervais and actress Lumley, in the 45-second footage, say how they have been asked by Egan, who is the UK Ambassador for charity Animals Asia, to tell people about the event and the cause it is raising money for. The film then cuts to a brief performance by Wakeman on the keyboards.

Ricky Gervais – support

Maria Rud will create images live to music projected on the historic building

Rick Wakeman has written music

Andy Dingley – ambitious project

Joanna Lumley – video

Combine

The show aims to combine art, music and architecture. The former Yes musician's compositions will be translated into live artworks by Rud, who will paint onto a lightbox, her creations then projected onto the building, which will become a spectacular canvas for the evening.

The Over the Moon set will be a blend of classic Wakeman material with new compositions written especially for the event. On stage with Rick will be his son Adam, percussionist Ed Scull and leading London vocal ensemble the English Chamber Choir, conducted by Guy Protheroe.

The event will be in 'promenade' format, allowing the audience to view the projection from different angles and fully immerse themselves in the performance.

The pioneering show is being arranged by Base Video Production which was founded by Andy Dingley and Warren Evans and is based in Rufford Road.

The company focuses on live event and TV production inside the UK and worldwide with their studio complex winning a House of Commons award for best venue in 2014.

Proceeds from the show will be donated to wildlife charity Animals Asia, which campaigns to end the bear bile trade. More than 10,000 moon bears or Asiatic black bears are caged on bile farms in China, according to Animals Asia figures.

Animals Asia has rescued over 600 bears, caring for them at its award-winning bear sanctuaries in China and Vietnam. The 'moon bears' are kept on farms where they are locked up in cages for years with bile extracted from their gallbladder daily. The bile is used for medical reasons such as the treatment of rheumatism.

Andy said: "Warren and I are very excited to be involved in such a unique and ambitious project, and to support a fantastic cause. Base Video Production have been involved from the outset, and it's rewarding to see the project come to fruition"

Wakeman added: "I like projects that are totally different to the norm, and I'm really looking forward to performing at Queen's House. Maria is a truly gifted artist, and I've written some special pieces especially for the show to go alongside some of my classic works. The concept is unique and exciting, and we're going to be raising money for a great charity."

Queen's House was designed by Inigo Jones in 1616 for King James I's wife, Anne of Denmark

Tickets are £32 for standard or £84 VIP. For more details visit soundandvisionlive.com

Shortage of staff results in care home closing down

A CARE home looking after almost 30 people is to shut because bosses struggled to recruit trained nurses.

Nethercrest Nursing Home in Netherton was told to improve by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) after an inspection last year, which uncovered staffing shortages.

At the weekend operator Astonbrook Care Homes said the 37-bed facility would close due to difficulties recruiting permanent trained nursing staff. It said the situation was worse in Dudley than elsewhere in the country.

The home, which looks after people with physical disabilities or dementia, has 33 staff. Families were told of the decision last week. No date has yet been set for closure. Dudley Council is working with the home and families to find alternative care for residents.

In a statement, operators said: "It is a decision that has been triggered by the extreme difficulties of recruiting permanent additional members for the nursing team and a clinical lead in particular. While there is a well publicised national shortage of qualified nurses the situation in Dudley is even more acute."

Lucy Holl, operations director, added: "Faced with the prospect of not being able to recruit trained nurses now, or in the foreseeable future, this regrettable decision is the only course of action open to us. Every step necessary will be taken to minimise disruption to residents and to ensure their move to care facilities suited to their nursing, care and personal needs is smooth and caring."

Police plea after motorcyclist hurt

POLICE have launched an appeal for witnesses after a motorcyclist was seriously injured in a crash involving a car in Dudley.

The incident happened on Duncan Edwards Way in Dudley just before 7am on Thursday, October 12.

Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service were called to the scene.

The motorcyclist, a man aged in his 30s, suffered multiple injuries and was gas given trauma care at the scene.

He was then taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Police closed the road between Pegasus Island and Cinder Bank after the accident to investigate. Any witnesses to the accident, which happened as rush hour got under way, are asked to call police on 101.

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Schools striving to improve

DUDLEY'S schools are the worst performing in the Black Country according to figures from education watchdog Ofsted.

Figures for the year up to August 2017 found that four per cent of the borough's schools were rated inadequate and 14 per cent required improvement.

However, 13 per cent were rated outstanding – the same percentage as Staffordshire – and 69 per cent were good, which was higher than both Walsall and Sandwell.

Dudley Council's education chief, Councillor Anne Millward, said the authority was striving to improve outcomes for all its schools.

"We are heading in the right direction, and we are working really hard alongside the schools improvement committee to target schools that need extra support," she said. "However, our task is made more difficult by the fact that successive Governments have been intent on repeatedly moving the goalposts.

"We get to a point where we are getting on top of things and then have to deal with a new curriculum, new ways of testing and new ways of reporting to the Government.

"As soon as we reach the required level they move the bar.

"We have an excellent working relationship with our schools, but there needs to be a smarter way of thinking nationally on how we determine schools' success."

Work is under way on leopards' home

WORK has started on extending the snow leopard enclosure at Dudley Zoo. The new surroundings will give the zoo's two big cats more space and allow visitors to see them better.

The building brings with it challenges because it is close to the 11th century Dudley Castle, a scheduled monument. Archaeologists are currently on site carrying out ground work ahead of the build, which is the latest project in the zoo's £295,000 anniversary revamp programme.

Zoo Manager Matt Lewis said: "We are hopeful the frame of the extension will be in place this week and the entire build completed in over a month's time."

Changing rooms

WORK on new sports facilities at a park in Cradley is to start next month. Changing rooms are to be built at Homer Hill Park. The scheme was rescued thanks to a £340,000 loan taken out by Dudley Council.

Sorrow and a pledge to improve care

Diane Wake

HOSPITAL bosses have vowed to improve governance, processes and standards of maternity care at Russells Hall following a damning report.

They spoke of their sorrow at the death of Myles, without going into the details of his care.

Russells Hall Hospital chief executive Diane Wake said: "We would like to offer our heartfelt condolences and apologies to the family of Myles Oakley for their tragic loss. We are unable to comment any further on individual cases."

At a Dudley Group Trust meeting last week officials announced that a maternity improvement plan was in place with additional training for midwives.

It comes as it was revealed that a total of 43 serious incidents were recorded over a 20-month period.

Bosses said that all families had been contacted with a 'commitment and promise' to have any of their questions answered.

During a presentation to board members, chief nurse, Siobhan Jordan, said: "We were not learning from the mistakes, but we set up a Quality Inspection Board (QIB) with many experts in midwifery. "There were meetings and engagements but most importantly engagement with the patients. If something is flagged up then we are looking at.

"Improved maternity governance is key and we are not just becoming isolated – we want to look at other organisations and work with those too."

Support will also be given from Birmingham Women's Hospital and the Maternity Unit at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton.

Other improvements have been added including peer reviews, additional training, consultant appointments and an improved midwife to birth ratio of 1:28.

'We didn't have the chance to hold him alive'

"YOU don't go into hospital to have a healthy baby and come out with an empty car seat."

They are the words of Louise Oakley, who has spoken of serious errors at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital which resulted in the death of her son Myles and prompted a major investigation into its maternity unit.

It was supposed to be one of the happiest days of their lives but 24 hours after going into hospital to welcome the arrival of their second child, the lives of Louise and husband Craig were left shattered.

Myles was left fighting for his life because of mistakes before birth and died at only one day old.

But as well as errors in the lead up to the birth, the parents claimed they were rushed into saying goodbye to their son and never got to hold him while he was alive.

The only pictures they have of their son were hurriedly taken on their mobile phones as a camera at the hospital wasn't working and the couple said didn't have time to get their own.

They say they were initially told there were no issues with the care received. But the couple, who are both police officers, were not satisfied with that response and carried out their own research by examining medical records.

Investigated

Myles' death was one of 43 serious incidents reported at Russells Hall's maternity department between April 2014 and December 2015 – 25 of which were re-examined amid concerns over how they were originally investigated.

Chief executive of the trust which runs the hospital, Diane Wake, this week apologised to Louise and Craig and other families affected, following a damning report into maternity services as she insisted improvements had since been made (see above).

A number of serious concerns were raised by the Maternity Quality Improvement Board, including babies' heart rates being wrongly monitored, staff being slow to react to urgent situations and the types of drugs given to induce labour.

Initial investigations into incidents to find out what went wrong, which included the case of Myles, were 'inadequate', the report said.

Craig and Louise Oakley – bereaved parents carried out their own research by examining medical records

All of these sounded familiar to Louise, 40, and Craig, 44, of Priory Close, Dudley, as many of the recommendations in the report came after errors during Myles' birth.

They arrived at Russells Hall in May 2015 expecting for Louise to give birth to a healthy baby boy. The first signs Myles was in trouble came at around 6.30pm when the ECG heart monitor started behaving erratically.

Craig said: "At 8pm he was pathological, so he was dying. He should have been delivered."

The parents say Louise was then given syntocinon, a drug used to speed up labour but one that should not be used when babies are in distress. Myles was not delivered until after 10pm, by which time it was too late.

Louise said: "Pandemonium broke out. They were shouting 'get the crash team'. It carried on for 45 minutes. I was screaming and shouting 'what's going on?'."

The battle to save Myles continued into the night but it soon became clear nothing could be done for him. His parents were taken to see him at 8am before his life support machine was switched off.

Louise said: "We didn't have the chance to hold him alive."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Supermarket gets nod for expansion

PROPOSALS for a supermarket to expand one of its stores in the Black Country has been given the green light by Dudley Council planners.

The application for Sainsbury's to extend its Amblecote store, to create a grocery online distribution hub, has been approved by Dudley Development Control Committee.

Councillor Andrea Goddard said it was a good move that will boost jobs.

But Councillor Paul Bradley, who stepped down from his vice-chairman's position to oppose the proposal on residents' behalf, said the decision was 'disappointing'.

He said: "The Sainsbury's was built in 1987, since then its just had extension after extension after extension. The distribution hub was the last straw for the locals. I'm working with locals to make sure they keep it as quiet as possible for them."

Mozart and Haydn are choir's choice

A CHOIR has announced details of its autumn concert.

Halesowen Choral Society will be performing on November 11 at St Margaret's Church, in Hagley Road, Halesowen. The concert will include pieces from Haydn's Nelson Mass and Mozart's Coronation Mass.

Tickets can be ordered at halesowenchoralsociety.org and are priced at £8.

The society is on the lookout for new members. It meets every Monday, from 7.30pm, at Hasbury Methodist Church, Albert Road, Halesowen.

Have a ball and help out hospice

EVENT organisers at Mary Stevens Hospice have launched an appeal to the public to sell the final few tickets for their anniversary ball.

The black and white themed gala on November 3 at the Ramada Park Hall Hotel, Wolverhampton will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the official opening of the Stourbridge hospice by Diana, Princess of Wales.

The final few tickets at £45 or £49 are available on on (01384) 377 778 or via www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/event/black-and-white-ball website.

Glasses will be raised at village Oktoberfest

A BEER festival is taking place in a village near Stourbridge. Oktoberfest is being held in Kinver on Saturday from 5pm until midnight at St Peter's Church Hall, Vicarage Drive. Entry is free and food will be available.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Debt: No it's not all fault of the bankers

POPULAR wisdom is that the financial crash 10 years ago was solely down to those who worked in the banking sector. Were it not for their reckless behaviour, everything would be fine and dandy, and we would all be basking in the joys of ever-growing living standards.

Certainly, the banking sector didn't cover itself in glory, but we kid ourselves if we think it was anything more than a bit-part player in the problems of the past decade. The real cause of the crash was debt. Ridiculous amounts of it. Both government and personal.

National debt more than doubled between 2005-2010. Record "investment" in health care often meant shiny new buildings leased from private companies under the PFI initiative – more debt.

Then there were the new NHS admin bodies with fancy names like "Beacon" and "Crystal", each with their own corporate logos, offices and PR teams. But then there was the even more vexed issue of personal debt. For every reckless loan doled out by the panto villains in the banks, there was also a misguided borrower. Did anybody really think a 115 per cent mortgage at five times their salary would end in anything but tears?

Blaming bankers is an alluring argument, particularly for politicians. After all, they are hardly going to say it was their fault. And blaming the general public tends not to go down terribly well either. Pointing the finger at people who are hard to love at the best of times is always going to be the easy option. The problem is that they have learned nothing.

Today, government debt is at an all-time high. For all the talk of "austerity", it is still spending more than is coming in. This cannot go on forever.

At the same time, UK personal debt stands at £1.6 billion, about what it was before the last crash.

Experts are particularly concerned about PCP car purchases. Take a look at all those shiny new 4x4s you see every day. How many have been paid for? About 14 per cent. Nearly nine out of 10 new cars are bought on the never-never. And don't get me started on payday loans and "rent-to-buy" stores.

We have become a want-it-now, throw-away society, where saving to buy things and making them last is seen as old-fashioned. It may not be palatable, but we have got to accept that not everyone can have a new car, flat-screen television, computer or smart phone. If we don't live within our means, another crash is inevitable.The only question is who we blame next time.

Film-makers not letting facts spoil a good story

You can take our lives, but not our freedom...to paint our faces blue, for the movie

W1A actress Sarah Parish, proving that the most basic slapstick comedy still works

Jamie Oliver's spat with Gordon Ramsey, about the size of their families has hit the headlines

Dramatic changes as history repeats itself

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

THE great writer Robert Harris says there is nothing worse than a screen or stage adaptation of a book sticking too closely to the plot and becoming "stilted" as a result. Actually, I can think of something worse. It is scriptwriters and producers altering historical facts.

THERE is no evidence, for example, that Queen Victoria's courtiers Lord Alfred Paget and Edward Drummond were gay, let alone had an affair. Indeed, Paget fathered 14 children which suggests he had a passing interest in heterosexuality. Yet in Victoria (ITV), Paget and Drummond are lovers. Writer Daisy Goodwin says she has been "creative" in her interpretation of history and "some people might get very cross with me." Only the sort of people who get cross at movies suggesting the Yanks retrieved the Nazi's Enigma code machine (U-571) or that William Wallace painted his face blue (Braveheart). These days, people get their history from television and movies. The least they can expect is accuracy.

THERE'S a running joke in the satirical comedy W1A (BBC1) about the BBC's digital subtitle service which can neither get things right nor be switched off, and which recently announced a show starring the popular pianist Jews Holland. But it's hard to satirise the Beeb's real subtitle service. It was rubbish when it was launched just in time for the Charles and Di wedding in 1981 and remains rubbish to this day. A few days ago I switched on the Beeb's mid-day weather forecast. The subtitles began: "It was a grey staff are some of it this morning" and went on to warn of "one or two Mac showers." In Scotland, presumably.

SOME say W1A has lost its spark and perhaps there is a natural limit to the number of buzzword jokes viewers will accept. Yet it still has some great gags. The moment the tall, chiselled and perfectly poised Anna (Sarah Parish) walked into the glass wall and knocked herself out was one of the best TV slapstick moments since Friends' Joey punched Ross in Central Perk.

RESIDENTS of Coseley in the West Midlands have called in their MP Pat McFadden because they are plagued with badgers which dig up their gardens and even damage house foundations. It's a tricky one for any politician because badgers are a protected species whose only serious enemy is the motor car. A friend was driving home the other night and paused in a farm lane to let one baby badger cross the road, followed by another, and another. There were eight of them. They are adding to a UK badger population estimated at 485,000 which is an 80 per cent increase since the 1980s. Princess Anne famously declared that there would be a good case for culling badgers even if there was no link to bovine TB.

THERE is, if we believe the tabloids, some friction between TV cooks Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay over the size of their families. Oliver has five kids, Ramsay four. I am surprised, in an age of rocketing world population, climate change and loss of habitat, that anyone draws attention to their own fecundity. There you are, dutifully dividing your household waste into three different bins each week in order to save the planet. If the couple next door have ten kids, you must ask yourself, what's the point?

YET another email this week alleges that if you support Brexit you're right-wing. Can I advise you to have a look at Jeremy Corbyn's record from 1975 of voting against the EU and all its works? And he's right-wing, is he?

MEANWHILE, still in Europe, the death is announced of Victorino Martín, 88, the greatest bull breeder in Spain. His beasts, the victorinos, were famed for their unpredictability in the ring. It may be that some of your hard-earned taxes are supporting bullfighting, via the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. As with so many EU affairs, it's not easy to find where the money went but a report by Green Party MPs four years ago reckoned about £103 million a year was used to subsidise the bullfighting industry. Another good reason for leaving. Hey, maybe we could spend the bullfighting money on the NHS.

TALKING POINT

Educating drivers to park their car safely

There has been so much in the Press. not just lately, but for months, years now – parents parking outside schools.

It's amazing how signs and double yellow lines are totally ignored in the panic to get their children to school on time. Get up a bit earlier and park in a safe (and legal) spot or, if possible walk to school, surely the better option as you can guarantee your young ones get some exercise. With all the problems these days with child obesity surely – if feasible – that is the best option.

Another problem with this inconsiderate parking is the knock-on, pavement parking, cars 'dumped' half on and half off the pavement. Maybe they think they are being clever avoiding double parking but this just causes problems for other mums. Try getting a buggy past the parked car, not enough room on what is left of the pavement which means the mum has to bump the buggy down on to the road and take her chances with the traffic. Not very safe.

This month is Walk to School Month which aims to promote healthy living, reduce levels of traffic and make roads safer for all. Good idea – let us just hope parents go along with it. Warning – careless parking is putting children's lives at risk, including your own. Those 'drive carefully' near school signs are there for everybody, so heed the warning.

And while we are talking about ignoring signs it is not just the parents who should take the blame. Driving near schools there is always plenty of notice that pupils will be in the vicinity, possibly crossing the road, and not all areas are these days lucky enough to have a crossing warden. Pupils should not have to take their lives in their hands because of motorists speeding along. Village roads are sometimes the worst with blind bends and narrow streets. Not the place where boy racers should be showing off. In fact that applies to all streets!

Just imagine if you were that driver how you would feel if something happened. Showing off could end with you in court or having to live with what you have done for the rest of your life. Think before you put your foot down, You might think it is clever but these pupils are somebody's son, daughter, brother, sister etc and you could destroy a family for ever.

Always remember that those few minutes you may save by dumping cars on pavement, parking illegally, or speeding by a school could mean a lifetime of misery for a family if an accident happens. Heed the signs – kill your speed not the child.

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Impressed by town's bright new museum

HAVING attended the official opening, congratulations to Dudley Regeneration and Enterprise for a very successful execution of their mission to relocate Dudley Museum.

While my doubts about parking and refreshments remain, the offering at the newly-located museum shows a very well balanced and engaging treatment that should provide something for all tastes.

They've played to the borough's strengths, ie geology and the castle/medieval history – and the time-trail approach is logical and informative.

There are plenty of breakout areas for activities with children to help interpret the displays.

I liked the focus on Sir Frank Brangwyn's work – focusing on one artist at a time in a discrete space is much more fulfilling than an array of random artists from different eras.

The key to continued success will be the temporary exhibitions they put on, which will bring back those who may feel they've 'done' the place after one visit.

Well done for investing in bright lighting and new cabinets – the place feels fresh, new and welcoming. The interpretive panels are clear and concise throughout.

Undoubtedly the key target market is schools, which should be suitably impressed with the museum as a high quality local resource for their studies.

MARTIN JONES
Sedgley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
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Mogg the man of the moment

OUR Prime Minister needs to take a leaf out of Harold Macmillan's book, when he sacked six cabinet ministers in what became known, our version, as the 'night of the long knives'. She needs to remove Philip Hammond, Amber Rudd and any in the cabinet who are committed EU remainers.

Boris Johnson should become Home Secretary and bring in Jacob Rees-Mogg as Foreign Secretary and young MPs from the back benches so they can all sing off the same hymn sheet.

Jacob Rees-Mogg knows all about British history, with upper-class mannerism and accent to boot. His traditionalist views, plus his humorous speeches, would have the Americans eating out of his hands and other countries fawning over him.

Jacob Rees-Mogg could become the greatest asset in these troubled times, so I call upon the Prime Minister to bring him into the cabinet as soon as possible.

MR R F GOODALL
Stourbridge

Crackpot plan for borough's refuse

I was somewhat dismayed to read that Dudley Council are considering relocating the refuse tip which is now in Stourbridge to another place in the borough.

This is after having ruled out locating it at the Leys in Brockmoor.

The mind boggles about this decision when you consider how this council have severely cut budgets to the bone and have to save millions of pounds. Charitable trusts have had budgets reduced to zero.

Can you just imagine how much a new tip would cost to set up? All this when the surplus ground is already there at the existing tip.

It makes one wonder which councillors' dream up these crackpot schemes.

BOB WHITEHOUSE
Kingswinford

Thanks for great show, a magical night out

MAY I take this opportunity to thank the Quarry Bank Musical Theatre Youth Society for their performance of Les Misérables on Friday, September 22.

Everyone from the cast, who gave outstanding performances, to the orchestra and the people who showed us to our seats, all were brilliant.

A standing ovation was a fitting tribute to an awe-inspiring production.

My own granddaughters took part, Kersten and Connie, and though I am biased, they were truly wonderful and brought a tear to my eye.

It was truly magical and thanks to you all who took any part in this production.

MAUREEN DAVIES
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Standard of entries excellent

Clent Gardening Club

THE August meeting welcomed an old friend in Philip Aubury who enlightened the assembled members with a talk on 'Conservatory & House Plants – A Survival Guide'. He gave much advice on the care and cultivation of indoor plants together with the best locations within a building to obtain the best results.

He also brought along a selection of plants for sale and, as usual, left with a somewhat lightened load!

The first Saturday in September witnessed the annual Clent Show when members had an opportunity to display their gardening prowess in various classes. Although the number of entries was disappointing this year, partly due to a poor growing season, the overall standard of entries was once again excellent. The show is held in conjunction with Clent WI whose members again excelled with a variety of crafts, cakes and preserves.

The club was delighted and honoured that the Queen's local representative Patricia Bradbury, the Deputy Lieutenant of Worcestershire, opened the show particularly as she lives within walking distance of the village hall!

The September monthly meeting welcomed Michael Jones from Stourbridge to give a seasonal talk on mistletoe. On October 27 Derek Higgott from Staffordshire gives a talk on 'The Secret Garden'.

Amblers to head for Waseley Hills

Wollaston E TWG

CHAIRMAN Julie Willetts welcomed 44 members and two visitors to the September meeting. A number of apologies were read, mostly due to members still being away on holiday.

The previous meeting's minutes were read and passed.

Members had made many feasible suggestions for future activities. The treasurer gave an account of the club's currently healthy financial position.

The national carol service will be on December 12 and the 2018 national AGM in Brighton on June 13.

Wollaston TG carol service will be on December 5 at Cobden Street Methodist Church, while the federation carol service will be at St Thomas' Church, Stourbridge, on December 9. The amblers, under the leadership of Jill Dunn, meet on October 25 for a walk in Waseley Hills Country Park.

The floral art section would welcome any members wishing to join them on Thursday mornings.The annual bowls shield was fiercely fought for by most bowling section members, with Glenys Allan eventually taking the honours.

Speaker Dr Mollie Hunton spoke passionately on her beliefs in homeopathic medicine. Members found her examples most interesting and seemed keen to learn more.

Barbara Homer and Christine Picken won the raffle and Elizabeth Grove and Pat Archer won the competition.

Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club

AT the September luncheon at The Lodge, Wellington Road, chairman Ann Rogers welcomed members back after the summer break. In August Ann had hosted a very successful coffee morning to raise funds for charity and to cover the cost of good speakers.

After a three-course lunch members welcomed speaker Sandy Cale who appeared in period costume for her talk on Elegant Georgian Worcester.

Sandy had been a city tour guide for 17 years and described not only the beautiful buildings but the trades, such as Royal Worcester china, Lea & Perrins sauces and Dents gloves. She also described the miserable times endured during this period with the plague caused by rats escaping from ships delivering clay from Cornwall and the public gallows above the gaol. Ably assisted by her husband's slides, she was an excellent speaker.

On November 10, MP Mike Wood will talk about the Parliamentary affairs. Call 01902 372984 or email albertgrif fithsme7@gmail.com

Season of lectures kicks off

The Black Country Society

FOR the first of the season's lectures, at the Portal, HQ of the Dudley Canal Trust, on Birmingham New Road, retired history teacher Peter Kennedy considered 'Air Raids in the Black Country in the Second World War'.

Retired Black Country GP, surgeon and author Dr Edward Cooke gives the next lecture on October 25 at 7.30pm. His book 'What The! reveals hilarious yet poignant details of his career ministering to the sick and sorry of the Black Country. Admission is £2. Email wjaymorgan28@gmail.com

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Call to be proud of past while forging the future

Political leaders from different parties meet students at the launch of the borough community vision at Coronation Gardens

POLITICIANS have united to urge residents and organisations to get involved in 'forging' a bright future for Dudley.

The Dudley Community Vision has been launched to try to 'define a clear direction for the borough'.

At the launch event, chiefs hailed Dudley's place as the historic capital of the Black Country and urged people to be 'proud of our past' and encouraged them to help in 'forging our future'.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley said: "We have so much to be proud of in Dudley borough.

"No matter what the political landscape of the borough is at any time, we need to have a clear vision for our community which remains consistent as we look to ensure Dudley borough is a great place to live, work and play."

Labour group leader Pete Lowe said: "We want this piece of work to engage with people on the street, workers from the voluntary sector, faith networks, young people, our emergency services and the business community."

UKIP group leader Paul Brothwood said: "Setting a vision for Dudley borough, which all of our 318,000 residents can truly be part of, will be a big step in the right direction.

"Dudley borough is the historic capital of the Black Country and by working together we can shout loud and proud about the great attributes the borough has to offer."

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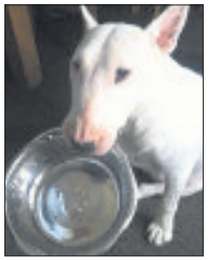
Act now – competition is hotting up

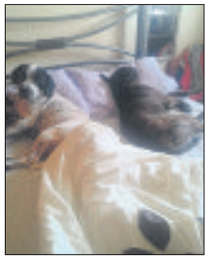
Billy and Tom have a special bond

Persian girls Rose and Peaches

Ferret Marley loves chasing balls

Otis rests on cake stand


Flo is feeling hungry


Dog tired – Dodger and Tigs

Together – Buzz and Echo

Now for something a little bit different

AND still they flood in, a wealth of pet pictures and this week something a bit different – a ferret, ponies and guinea pigs.

Asking for food, cosying up together or posing with flowers they all have their own tale to tell. And we want to hear them. Keep those pictures coming in. It is going to be a difficult job for you readers to judge but we hope you are enjoying seeing the pictures!

Send us a picture of your beloved pet and, as well as the chance to see your pet in print, you could also win a £100 cash prize.

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Our Chronicle judges are simply looking for interesting pictures. We will select 10 of our favourite pictures and then it is up to our readers to decide on the winner.

To enter email the images to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk with your name and details, including where you are from and a bit of information about your pet.

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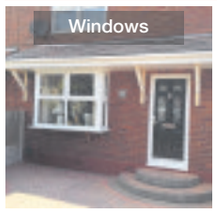

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'Tidy' travellers win praise from MP

THEY are often chastised for leaving piles of rubbish wherever they go but one group of travellers has been praised for mowing the grass at a site they illegally occupied.

The group of Scandinavian travellers prompted concerns from council bosses when they set up on a football pitch off Lister Road in Dudley earlier this year. But officers from the authority were stunned when they found a member of the group busy with a lawn mower during a site visit.

The group in around 18 caravans spent a week at the site in May. They are also tidied away rubbish before they left.

Dudley South MP Mike Wood made the revelation during a House of Commons debate on illegal traveller encampments in which MPs discussed the need for more powers to remove travellers from playing fields and parks. He told MPs: "Some of those camps, although unauthorised, have caused very little damage or disruption.

Toilets

"One group of travellers from Scandinavia tidied up after themselves, mowed the grass, and probably left the pitch in a better condition than that in which they had found it."

Mr Wood later added: "I think we can say that this particular group of travellers were fairly unusual in that they called the council and asked for Portakabin toilets when they first arrived. They tidied up the entire site before they left and one of them mowed the grass. If every group of travellers was like them then I don't think we would have any problems."

Currently police powers (under Section 61 and 62a of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act), allow the removal of trespassers who cause criminal damage or engage in abusive and intimidating behaviour, or have six or more vehicles on land. Police can seize vehicles.

Mr Wood said: "Police often seem to consider it inappropriate or unlawful to use section 61 powers because of the lack of welfare assessments and the needs of the children are likely to be applied to any such new powers."

Travellers set up on a football pitch off Lister Road in Dudley but didn't leave a costly mess for taxpayers

Cleaning up camps costs taxpayers £150,000

DUDLEY Council has spent more than £150,000 over the last three summers cleaning up the mess left behind by illegal traveller camps.

Conservative MP Mike Wood said illegal camps in his Dudley South constituency had left the authority with the huge bill, as he called for clearer Government guidance on how police and councils can use powers to move on travellers.

His concern is shared by Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin, who has described the mess left by the transient land occupiers as 'completely unacceptable'.

Mike Wood MP – 'greater clarity' is needed in dealing with illegal occupations

Their comments came as the Government's Communities Minister Alok Sharma announced a review into the effectiveness of laws designed to tackle illegal camps set up by travellers and gypsies.

Speaking during a House of Commons debate on the issue, Mr Wood said: "There have been illegal incursions in areas including Netherton, Woodside, Wordsley and Kingswinford.

"There has been defecation and urination on playing pitches and children's playing areas.

Impact

"While the impact of that is, of course, felt most keenly by residents in the immediate area, the cost of dealing with it – in terms of enforcement and clearing up – is felt by the whole borough and has amounted to more than £150,000."

Mr Wood added that while he supported giving the police new powers to deal with illegal traveller camps, there needed to be greater clarity on how existing powers were being used.

Ian Austin MP – mess is 'completely unacceptable'

Labour MP Ian Austin said: "I want the council and the police to be able to deal with such sites much more quickly. I also want the council to take much stronger measures to prevent them from being occupied in the first place."

Mr Austin urged MPs to listen to proposals from West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, who has called for powers enabling local authorities to direct groups of travellers to transit sites outside of their administrative borders.

"It is my job to speak up for people in Dudley who have been affected by these camps, " said Mr Austin.

"What people in Dudley have had to put up with this summer, as in previous years, is completely and utterly unacceptable, and I want tougher and swifter action to deal with them, as well as measures that prevent travellers getting on to local parks and community facilities in the first place."

"I also want the Government to look at the proposals of David Jamieson, the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner who has done a huge amount of work on these issues."

Mr Austin asked Mr Sharma top met Mr Jamieson and West Midlands MPs to discuss the impact of these issues in the region.

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Euro MP donated his kidney to save colleague

A POLITICIAN, who was Labour candidate for West Midlands Mayor, donated a kidney to save the life of one of his party's MPs.

It has only recently been revealed that Sion Simon gave his kidney to Perry Barr MP Khalid Mahmood in 2014.

In a joint interview, where they spoke publicly for the first time about the astonishing act of kindness, Mr Mahmood said he was 'hugely indebted' to his party colleague.

"It meant being able to live a normal life, which was getting increasingly difficult," said Mr Mahmood, aged 56, who is Labour's shadow Europe minister. "Essentially what Sion did for me, a huge sacrifice on his part, ended up allowing me to have a normal life again."

West Midlands MEP Mr Simon said that deciding to become a 'living donor' had not been a 'terribly difficult decision'. "He was in a very bad way, he needed a kidney," he said.

Homes scheme for landfill site rejected after campaign

CONTROVERSIAL plans to build 100 homes on a former landfill site in Dudley have been thrown out.

Developer Real Homes One Limited had applied to build 100 properties on the contaminated land in Bourne Street, Coseley. But the application was refused by Dudley Council's planning committee last week.

The site had been used as a tip from the 1950s until the mid-1980s. A 527-signature petition and 32 letters of objection were sent to planners.

Councillor John Martin said: "There are some sites that should just not be considered for residential development and we should not be building on sites like this."

A decision on the application was deferred in September. Experts had said the land was contaminated and could pose a risk to human health but the ground would be treated if the scheme was approved.

Margaret Holden, who has lived near the site for 50 years, said: "It should never go ahead. We watched them fill that site, it was horrendous, it was like living on the edge of hell."

Councillor Adam Aston said: "I'm delighted that the committee have quite overwhelmingly refused the application."

Adoption families are urged to help siblings

A BLACK Country adoption association is asking people to consider adopting sibling children as part of National Adoption Week, which began on Monday.

The regional consortiumAdoption is calling for people to consider if they could adopt two or more siblings.

New statistics published as part of National Adoption Week show 67 per cent of children in the West Midlands waiting for adoption are brothers and sisters in groups of two or more. It proves more difficult to place siblings with a family than individual children.

An information event will be held at the Village Hotel in Dudley today (Thurday) from 6pm. See the website www.adoptionblackcountry.co.uk or call 0800 073 0597.

Paedophile who preyed on young girls jailed

A PAEDOPHILE who preyed on young teenage girls, sexually assaulting five of them, has been jailed for more than 17 years.

Kevin Giannoni struck after using alcohol and cigarettes to lure them to his home, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

The 53-year-old pervert groomed the victims by letting them do things their parents forbade, like drinking and smoking, explained Miss Sharon Bahia, prosecuting.

Kevin Giannoni – perverted

Then, when they regarded him as an 'uncle' they could trust and confide in, he gave them 'lessons' in sex and boasted: 'I am a man with wise words.'

The court heard he even pretended to be a St John Ambulance official to appear more trustworthy.

The girls said they frequented the address because they could do what they wanted and felt 'grown up' but once snared they were controlled by his threats to tell their parents. "He believed he was invincible," said Miss Bahia.

Movies

The girls were encouraged to play games with a sexual element and watch pornographic home movies during visits to his address, where he took naked pictures of them after they had been plied with drink. Some were sexually assaulted on numerous occasions.

Giannoni, who lived alone, ignored a warning about his behaviour, which continued for eight years until one of the victims revealed details.

The defendant, of Cannon Drive, Coseley, was arrested in September 2016 by officers who discovered sexually explicit items and a pen camera at his home.

Naked pictures of the girls he had deleted from his computer were recovered with special software but he repeatedly denied the claims of the girls until the day after his trial had been due to start.

Miss Samantha Powis, defending, said: "He had no friends and no female companionship. That is no excuse for what happened but that was the context in which these offences were committed. He was particularly lonely."

Giannoni admitted making indecent images of children and sexual activity with children and was sent to prison for 17 and a half years.

Judge Simon Ward told him: "You used the trust they put in you to lure them into your world of sexual perversion. You manipulated them socially so you could abuse them sexually and feed you perverted sexual appetite."

Focus on hate crimes

HATE crimes will be examined and discussed at drop-in sessions in Dudley as part of a national awareness campaign.

The national event is organised by Stop Hate UK. Today (Thursday) people are invited to the Gather coffee shop, on High Street, Dudley, from 11am to 2pm or at Victim Support, The Broadway, Dudley the following day from 10am to 1pm.

Health food chain opens 100th store

GRAPE Tree, the Kingswinford-based health foods retailer, is marking its fifth anniversary and has reached the milestone of 100 stores

The company has become one of the UK's fastest growing retailers by opening a new outlet every two weeks. Stores now stretch from Loch Lomond to Chichester with more than a dozen in the Midlands. There is also a flourishing on-line shopping service.

In line with its growth, the company headquarters and distribution centre on Pensnett Trading Estate, where the company packs its own branded products, has doubled in size.

Founder Nick Shutts said "We have been driven by demand from shoppers. We have been receiving appeals from people to open shops in their area."

£1,000 raised by skydivers

TWO staff members who work for an energy company in the Black Country raised more than £1,000 for charity by sky diving.

Leo Chell and Lorie Hollies leapt out of a plane at 13,000 feet above Nottinghamshire, raising the cash for the Alzheimer's Society. Leo, who works for E.ON in Kingswinford, said: "My stepdad suffers from dementia so I know all about the impact it can have."

FOCUS ON KINGSWINFORD & WALL HEATH

Work to start on £1.7m affordable homes scheme

WORK to build new 'affordable' homes in Kingswinford as part of a £1.7 million project is set to get under way.

Dudley Council has been given planning permission to build 12 two-bedroom and four one-bedroom apartments on Beech Road.

Chiefs said the project – the part of the council's commitment to build more affordable homes in the borough – involves the demolition of a row of shops and maisonettes. The demolition work is due to start this month.

The new homes will be built by developer Jessup, and are due to be ready to let to the public by autumn 2018.

Regenerate

Dudley Council's deputy council Councillor David Vickers said: "We've been working for a long time to make this project a reality so it's fantastic news that work is due to start.

"This project gives us the opportunity to not only regenerate an area that has been crying out for redevelopment in recent years but also provide new affordable homes for local people in an area where we have a limited number of council properties available."

Clive Jessup, managing director at Jessup, added: "We have all worked hard on this scheme and it's great to see it finally under way.

The design has been closely coordinated with the development team at Dudley to ensure a flexibility of affordable apartments for Dudley residents. We look forward to delivering another high quality scheme for the council."

There had been three objections including concerns about traffic and parking.

In the summer Kingswinford South ward councillor Patrick Harley, who is also council leader, welcomed the plan. He said: "Some of the shops have been empty for the best part of 25 years. I feel this is long overdue. New homes are always needed. "

By David Cosgrove

Organiser Andrew Day, with wife Rachel, before the Kingswinford Charity Truck Convoy

Convoy's donor help for Rachel

MORE than 50 trucks travelled in convoy to Kingswinford to raise awareness of organ donation.

The Kingswinford Charity Truck Convoy, which is in its fifth year, recently saw truckers from all over the West Midlands taking part. The trucks travelled from junction 10 of the M6, through Bilston, Dudley, finishing at Kingswinford.

The aim was to raise awareness of organ donation and raise money for Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Organiser Andrew Day's wife Rachel underwent a liver transplant at the QE in 2006. Now however, the mother-of-four and grandmother-of-three is in need of another transplant.

"Now it's a case of wanting to raise awareness and try and find someone who can help her again," he said.

Singers to perform for Legion

KINGSWINFORD'S own male voice choir will take a leading role when the annual Dudley Festival of Remembrance is being held in Dudley Town Hall on November 9, from 7.30pm.

Kingswinford-based choir The Gentlemen Songsters and Dudley Council are organising the popular event in aid of The Royal British Legion.

It will feature a service of dedication remembering those lost in conflict, followed by entertainment provided by The Gentlemen Songsters, Sovereign Brass and Lutley Community Voices.

Tickets are £5 and further information is available online at www.gsmvc.org.uk or boroughhalls.co.uk/dudley-festival-of-remembrance.html or call the ticket hotline on 01746 763850.

New owners for old pub

A PUB in Wall Heath which closed suddenly is being taken over by another pub and restaurant operator.

Former landlords Punch Taverns have revealed that the Wall Heath Tavern in High Street has been taken over by another company and is set to re-open on November 6 with a manager from the local area.

There are no plans for a major refurbishment before doors open again at the Victorian cottage-style pub.

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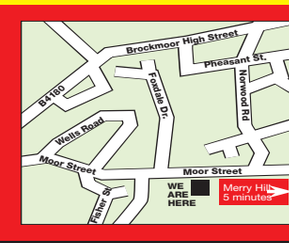

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Bringing on brightest and best

ANOTHER batch of names has been revealed in the hunt to find the 100 most talented and skilled Masters from the Black Country.

Creative Black Country, which set out to identify the 100 Masters, is trickling out the names of those who made the list. The first names were revealed last month and here are some more nominated by the people of the Black Country.

For several months members of the public have been naming people they know who are 'brilliant at what they do'. The year-long regional campaign is aimed at inspiring and offering people a fresh perspective about the strengths, skills, talent and expertise surfacing from their locality and community. Hundreds of nominations were submitted for the June 30 deadline and now the 100 Masters list has been compiled.

The list ranges from award-winning authors, sought-after designers, green-fingered gardeners, globe-trotting art directors, engineers, athletes, crafts people, entrepreneurs, brewers, dancers, artists, poets and community ambassadors, among others, representing extraordinary talent from the Black Country.

The shortlisted Masters were chosen via a panel selection process and come from a breadth of backgrounds, ages and areas of the region.

Named in the first 20 masters were, supermodel Erin O'Connor, artist Elizabeth Ilsley, film-maker Drew Roper and Willard Wigan who creates artworks in the eye of the needle.

Creative Black Country also commissioned the Funny Things comedy festival which is running from October 23 until November 5 at some 16 Wolverhampton venues.

Project Co-ordinator, Liam Smyth, from the Arts Council England funded group Creative Black Country said the Black Country was forged by skilled craftspeople.

He said: " It was through their craftsmanship and diligence that the region became renowned as the industrial heartland of the UK. 100 Masters is an arts campaign to identify contemporary skilled people from the Black Country and help inspire future talent."

Here we picture some of the latest names of candidates from Dudley and surrounding areas.

Details on www.100masters.co.uk website.

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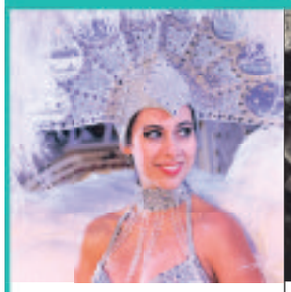

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Author's tips on making the write choice

Author Dave Lowe with Dormston pupils, from left, Grace Ruston, Lakayla Williamson, Regan Parkes and Max Pearce

HE once dreamed of becoming an author while sitting in the classroom at his Dudley school. Australia-based author David Lowe returned to Dormston School, in Sedgley, to share top tips with writers of the future.

Dudley-born David taught English for four years at a school in Turkey and also worked in Malaysia before his globetrotting led to Australia. The father-of-two is now known for his books about a grumpy hamster, Jasper Stinkybottom in My Hamster is a Dectective, My Hamster is a Pirate and My Hamster's Got Talent.

David said: "I don't think I'm naturally talented at writing, I just practised a lot. Since I realised I would never play centre-forward for West Bromwich Albion, I've always wanted to be a writer."

Death crash driver guilty

A SPEEDING learner driver from Stourbridge, who was over the drink limit, has been convicted of killing a young mother.

Jurors unanimously convicted Joseph Chance of causing the death of Nadine Foster by dangerous driving in April 2016. The 25-year-old was found guilty last week following a trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

Chance and friend Dylan Stringer were driving along Oldswinford's Hagley Road in two vehicles when the fatal crash occurred.

Former Dudley College student Nadine Foster, who was a front seat passenger in Stringer's Ford Focus, was left with serious injuries when the car ploughed into a wall.

Hospital

The 18-year-old mother, who had also studied at Pedmore Technology College, died in hospital 10 days later.

During the trial, jurors were told the three had been drinking in Stourbridge's Chicago Rock Cafe before leaving the venue in the early hours of April 16.

The two drivers began speeding in Hagley Road, Oldswinford. Chance, who was driving a Renault Clio sped across the road with Springer behind. The jury heard the two cars reached speeds of almost 80mph.

Chance, of Murcroft Road, and Stringer, of Wychbury Road, Stourbridge, who pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving at an earlier hearing, are to be sentenced on November 7.

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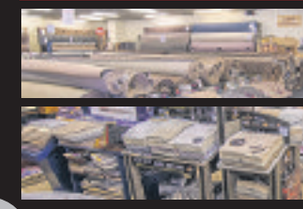

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Mysterious and spooky, they're altogether ooky

AN ALL-STAR cast brings a new production of The Addams Family to Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre this week

The show stars Samantha Womack as Morticia Addams, Les Dennis as Uncle Fester and Carrie Hope Fletcher as Wednesday Addams until Saturday.

Everyone's favourite ooky kooky family are on stage in the spectacular musical comedy from the writers of hit musical Jersey Boys, with music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa.

Wednesday Addams, the princess of darkness, is all grown up and has a shocking secret that only Gomez knows. She's fallen in love with a nice young man from a respectable family.

With his cherished Morticia in the dark will Gomez manage to keep his daughter's secret until the two families meet ? Uncle Fester, Lurch, Pugsley and more will play out a heart-warming story of love, family and friendship . . . with a twist.

Creepy and kooky – The Addams Family cast with Carrie Hope second from left

Sing

Social media star Carrie Hope Fletcher has previously featured in numerous musicals, including Les Miserables, Mary Poppins and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang at Birmingham Hippodrome.

Music was always part of her life and her brother Tom Fletcher is the bespectacled singer and guitarist in pop group McFly.

"We always had some kind of musical playing in the background, and me and my brother would sing along in the car. I remember loving Beauty and the Beast on stage – all the girls wanted to be Belle," she said Carrie. "I could hide behind a character and become a different person. I was actually quite shy at school – I took a back seat, and I was terrified to put my hand up in class – but I was first in line for school plays.

"Acting can be escapism, a way of getting away from your own situation and insecurities. Someone asked me whether it's hard performing if I've had a bad day or I'm stressed out, but actually that's the best time to go play a character."

She enjoys the morbid mirth of The Addams Family, adding: "I grew up with the films. I'm a big fan of dark humour – I love Tim Burton and The Munsters.

"I didn't realise there was an Addams Family musical until about four years ago. Then when I heard about the UK tour I said to my agent 'Please, please, I have to do this'."

A scene from the musical as 'Cilla' sings while Bobby, left, watches on from the dancefloor

Step Inside Love, this musical is a must see

REVIEW

By SUE ATTWATER

Cilla – The Musical, New Alexandra Theatre

Anyone who had a heart could not fail to be moved by this new production. It's a warts and all story of the life of the legendary Cilla Black, one that she was happy for all to see.

And the audience at the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham just lapped it up. It is now just over two years since the beloved 1960s pop star died and Cilla – The Musical, is a spectacular and heart-warming musical adaptation of the critically-acclaimed ITV mini-series based on her early life.

The story was originally written for the 2014 series Cilla, in which she was brilliantly played by Sheridan Smith.

A tough act to follow but Kara Lily Hayworth, discovered by open audition where she queued for four hours, fully inhabits the role and has a terrific voice. Not quite Cilla as it has a softer tone but the audience still loved it.

The story follows the extraordinary life of the ordinary teenage girl from Liverpool, Priscilla White, and her rocky, yet incredible, rise to fame. By the age of just 25 she was recognised as as international singing star. By 30 she had become Britain's favourite TV entertainer and went on to headline series' of Blind Date and Surprise Surprise.

The musical score of course included Cilla's greatest hits Anyone Who Had a Heart, Alfie and Something Tells Me, alongside a backdrop of the legendary "Liverpool Sound" including the Beatles' Twist and Shout, and American influences like California Dreamin' by The Mamas and The Papas.

This is a show laying Cilla's personal life and the man who loved her and eventually managed her career, Bobby Willis played by Carl Au. It also shed light on the demons for Beatles manager Brian Epstein played by Andrew Lancel. They were the big influences in her life and in the musical.

The production is due at the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent from November 14-18.

It is altogether superb so get a ticket and Step Inside, Love – you won't regret it.

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Old vases are again fashionable with buyers

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES

with John Ridgway of Perry & Phillips

VASES have long been a very useful addition in terms of home design, able to bring a touch of colour or seasonal style to any room.

They are very affordable – unless you want fabulously expensive ones – and always available at good prices in the saleroom.

Vases have been around since the times of the ancient Greeks but those similar to the ones we use today, originally known as flower glasses, were around in the 1700s, although it wasn't until the Victorian era that they became popular and readily available.

They come in all sorts of shapes, styles, designs and sizes – and materials range from brass and silver to china and wood.

The Victorian vases tended to be very ornate, often featuring glorious floral patterns, and were produced by all the major manufacturers of the day including Royal Worcester and Royal Crown Derby.

Shapes changed in the 1920s and 1930s with the more streamlined designs of Art Deco and Art Nouveau (although flower patterns were still right up there with Art Nouveau!) and by the forties vases has started to look a little more functional, although still stylish.

The fifties had its own unique elegance and this was mirrored in home decoration, including vases, and of course the 1960s saw everything become very brightly coloured.

The seventies vases were both colourful and slightly wacky in both style and shape – and although they went right out of fashion in following decades they are now popular once more.

Vases placed in the right position can alter the look of any room, whether filled with fresh or dried flowers or standing empty, and they always look good grouped together.

Because they will almost all have been used for practical purposes rather than display vases may well have suffered some minor damage over the years so check for cracks and chips before you buy.

• Perry and Phillips hold valuation days, for sale items only, every Wednesday from 10am until 4pm.
• The next Perry and Phillips sale of antiques and collectables takes place at the Mill Street saleroom in Low Town, Bridgnorth, on Tuesday, December 5. Viewing will be during the weekend and on Monday and also from 10am on auction day.
• New sale bidders are advised to attend the saleroom early on auction day to register and be allocated a bidding number.

Turning our children into matching mini-mes

It's not exactly a new trend...

STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis

WHEN I was about seven, I remember having an arran cardigan knitted by my mum.

It was cream, cabled, chunky, warm and matched perfectly the one she had knitted for my dad and for herself. It was a popular trend in the mid 1960s and we all wore them at the same time.

I followed a similar path as my son grew up, as a family we wore garments of matching colours rather than matching style and my husband and I still tone for special occasions.

I've given the family a theme for Christmas, my daughter in law is planning matching outfits for her and our granddaughter!

As with every fashion the trend returns, I wonder if it has ever been away, maybe just disguised in various different forms.

This newest of childrenswear trend appears with a modern twist entitled "Mini-Me".

Shops are selling miniature versions of their adult clothing, footwear and accessories, mostly specialised designs to suit the younger market.

No one wants to see plunging necklines and bodycon on children.

The beauty of the latest styling is that the adult version is very slightly different to the son or daughter version. Similar prints, negative colours, smaller or larger graphics but co-ordinating all the same.

Children are becoming fashion conscious at a much earlier age, aware of designers and high street retailers, an added expense and new headache for parents worldwide.

Celebrities

Celebrities such as Victoria Beckham, and Katie Holmes have strengthened this trend, regularly being photographed with their daughters wearing similar clothing.

The shops have reported a considerable increase in sales of young boys clothing with the photographic presence of the young Beckham boys and Rocco Ritchie in the latest designer clothing.

Dolce & Gabbana, Givenchy, Fendi, Gucci, Kenzo, Chloe and Burberry have included "Mini-Me" in their ranges.

A young traditional Burberry trench selling for over £300, tiny Hunter wellies for over £30 and miniature Ugg boots for £100 plus. Selfridges in London reporting 80 per cent increase in sales of these children's versions of adult designer clothing.

The styling ranges from pretty and twee to smart power dressing and the high street is producing value garments in similar styles.

If you do not wish to match exactly then the trend also allows for styles based on normal adult clothing and accessories that are not normally seen in your children's wardrobe, Converse, leather biker jackets, Doc Martins, animal print, skinny jeans, Harrington jackets, faux fur, pinstripe and peep toe shoes.

There is plenty of choice, check out River Island, H&M childrenswear and the supermarkets also have amazing designs straight from the catwalk.

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Alex with the drone in Iceland

A stunning view of an icy bay

Alex and Ina with the drone which they affectionately call 'Gertrude'

Capturing frozen beauty of Iceland with Gertrude

A road in Iceland shot from above

TWO film-makers who juggle their business with jobs at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton certainly managed to capture some dramatic images and spectacular footage on a trip to Iceland.

Battling unpredictable and harsh weather, armed with a drone, Alex Hatfield and Ina Krombholz set off on an expedition to capture the 'raw beauty and natural spectacle of winter across Iceland like never before.'

The result is the film Island, the latest effort from the aerial specialists Skies Untold.

It begins above the Nordic country's Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon. The film then follows a journey across Iceland including breathtaking overhead shots of Seljalandsfoss and Brúarfoss waterfalls, the Vatnajökull glacier at Skaftafell, and the lighthouse at Arkanes, built in 1918 and one of the oldest concrete structures of its kind in the country.

Along the way, the aerial photography and cinematography experts take viewers along deserted highways, swoop among smouldering geysers and halt for close-ups of a herd of wild horses.

By Diane Davies

Skies Untold was set up by drone pilot Alex Hatfield, who was born and raised in Wolverhampton and has been building multicopters in his spare time since 2010.

He met his partner, Ina Krombholz from Berlin, Germany, while she was studying for her Masters in graphic design at the University of Wolverhampton, and they both discovered a mutual passion for aerial cinematography.

Both aged 27, Alex and Ina work at Wolverhampton Grand as a stage technician and dresser respectively, while Ina also has her own jewellery business.

Unpredictable

Spending seven days in Iceland in March, the gruelling weather conditions caused some issues for the film-makers and their drone affectionately known as Gertrude. Alex said: "They really aren't joking when they say the weather is entirely unpredictable in Iceland! This made filming difficult and we weren't able to shoot a lot of the things we had planned prior to the trip. Due to this, a lot of the locations shot aren't the usual tourist spots.

"They are smaller things we just happened across and took advantage of whilst driving the main A roads around the island. We stopped and filmed where and when we could, if the weather allowed.

"Furthermore, due to Iceland's latitude and ground make up, magnetic interference can prove to be problematic when flying drones. Gertrude has a digital compass which it uses to stabilise and orientate itself, and this would often fail, requiring sequences to be reshot or abandoned. However, we persevered throughout the shoot and I think the end results were more than worth the struggle."

Alex said: "On complex shoots where I need to concentrate entirely on flying, Ina operates the camera. There are two controllers, one operates the drone and the other controls the camera settings and direction independently. Ina is gifted with a cameray.

Camera operator and editor Ina said: "We have wanted to visit Iceland for some time. Seeing the it for the first time feels like stepping onto an alien planet that is still in the process of forming; the black sands, endless lava fields, jagged cliffs, waterfalls, glaciers and yellow green moss that carpets huge swathes of land. It feels raw and beautifully unfinished. What better place to film?"

Following the success of 'Island,' the duo's next project will seem them undertake more coastal filming around the UK.

The Ticket

LET'S ALL GO CRAZY FOR TOM

INSIDE

MUSIC + THEATRE + TV LISTINGS + PUZZLES

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Oh, Tom! We are still Crazy For You

He never once thought about packing it in, though his mates told him he ought to. During his six wilderness years, Tom Chambers worked variously as a barman, pizza delivery guy, HGV driver and more. He took whatever work he could get because nobody wanted to give the fledgling actor a job.

So he recorded a video of himself tap dancing, showing off skills that few possess. And he sent it to 1,000 people – yes, 1,000. Two of them responded.

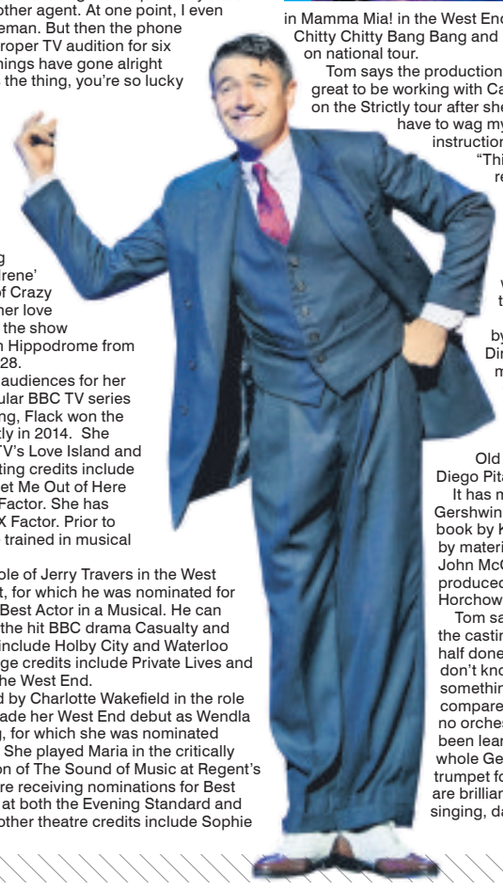
"I was lucky, one of those responses led to a TV audition."

The audition was for Holby City and that, in turn, led to an appearance on Strictly Come Dancing. For Tom, at least, the rest is history and he is now one of the biggest stars of the West End. Musical theatre adores the man who won the sixth series of Strictly with partner Camilla Dallerup.

"In this industry, you either have to have a screw loose or be slightly mad. Not giving up for that long and having that never-ending belief that you'll get there requires something a little different. Even now, I still can't quite believe what I'm doing.

"I tried for six years after drama school, I was a barman, pizza delivery, HGV driver . . . You name it. Then I did a tap dance and sent it out to 1,000 people and I got two responses. Everyone was telling me to quit. They were telling me to find another agent. At one point, I even signed up to be a fireman. But then the phone rang offering me a proper TV audition for six years. I took it and things have gone alright since that. But that's the thing, you're so lucky to get work in this industry. You only have to watch X Factor to realise what talents people have."

'Pure enjoyment' – Tom and Charlotte in Crazy For You



Tom is lining up with another Strictly winner, Caroline Flack, who is making her stage debut as 'Irene' in the national tour of Crazy For You. Tom plays her love interest, Bobby, and the show reaches Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday to October 28.

Best known to TV audiences for her star-turn on the popular BBC TV series Strictly Come Dancing, Flack won the 12th season of Strictly in 2014. She currently presents ITV's Love Island and her previous presenting credits include I'm a Celebrity . . . Get Me Out of Here NOW! and The Xtra Factor. She has also presented The X Factor. Prior to presenting, Caroline trained in musical theatre.

Tom created the role of Jerry Travers in the West End musical Top Hat, for which he was nominated for an Olivier Award for Best Actor in a Musical. He can currently be seen in the hit BBC drama Casualty and his other TV credits include Holby City and Waterloo Road. His recent stage credits include Private Lives and White Christmas in the West End.

They will be joined by Charlotte Wakefield in the role of Polly. Charlotte made her West End debut as Wendla in Spring Awakening, for which she was nominated for an Olivier Award. She played Maria in the critically acclaimed production of The Sound of Music at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre receiving nominations for Best Actress in a Musical at both the Evening Standard and Olivier Awards. Her other theatre credits include Sophie in Mamma Mia! in the West End, Truly Scrumptious in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang and Laurey in Oklahoma!, both on national tour.

Tom says the production is enormous fun. "It's great to be working with Caroline again. I judged her on the Strictly tour after she won it in 2014. I didn't have to wag my finger at her and give her instructions, she was step perfect.

"This is her first musical. She's really purposeful. She didn't want the lead because it's her first one and she didn't want to jump in the deep end. But she's like a box of fireworks. You never what what colour it's going to be next."

Crazy For You is directed by The Watermill's Artistic Director, Paul Hart, with musical arrangements by Catherine Jayes (The Color Purple, Broadway). It is choreographed by Nathan M. Wright (High Society, Old Vic) and is designed by Diego Pitarch (The Addams Family).

It has music and lyrics by George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin and a book by Ken Ludwig. It was inspired by material by Guy Bolton and John McGowan and was originally produced on Broadway by Roger Horchow and Elizabeth Williams.

Tom says: "Everything is about the casting, get that right and it's half done. In this show, you almost don't know where to look. There's something unique about this show compared to the originals. There's no orchestra or pit, the music's been learnt – imagine that, a whole Gershwin. I have to play the trumpet for four bars but the rest are brilliant. The cast have learned singing, dancing, acting and playing an instrument at the same time. There's tap dancing, spinning and playing clean notes. How you do play a violin cleanly when you're jumping around on the stage?

> *I'd say the Black Country crowd has a brilliant sense of humour*

"Everything you see played on stage is live and real. It makes it very, very exciting. It's pure enjoyment, pure escapism, a big bundle of fun. It's like medicine for the soul."

Tom was drawn to the stage by Crazy For You, which he saw when he was 15 with Ruthie Henshall. "If there was one role in my entire life at the top of my bucket list, it was Bobby. With loads of musicals, the scripts are neither here nor there. But this was written in the 1990s – when the Die Hards and When Harry Met Sally were coming out. The dialogue at that time was great with loads of one-liners. So the audience smile from start to finish. It's a classic boy meets girl, but it's the lengths Bobby goes to that makes it funny, there's a farcical element to it."

Tom is also looking forward to being back in Birmingham, where he played in Top Hat.

"I've done Top Hat and Private Lives too. It's lovely to be back. I'd say the Birmingham and Black Country crowd have a brilliant sense of humour, they're always very warm. Some parts of the country, I can't name them, they're a little bit cooler and reserved, whereas with Birmingham the audience is ready to have a good time from the moment the curtain goes up."

● **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

Simon Lipkin as popular Mr Poppy

Festive favourite in world stage premiere at Rep

NATIVITY! The Musical, a stage show based on a series of popular festive movies created by Birmingham writer and director Debbie Isitt, is bringing Christmas early to Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Opening with its world premiere tomorrow (Friday), the musical filled with cute children, laughs and popular tunes will run for just over three weeks.

The Nativity series of three films have become family favourites, written and directed by Bafta award winner Isitt. And now she brings to the stage the hilarious story of a school's attempt to stage the best nativity play, led by the exasperated teacher Mr Maddens and his eccentric teaching assistant Mr Poppy, and featuring 27 enthusiastic youngsters – all from the West Midlands.

"Birmingham and the West Midlands has so many talented children and I loved meeting all of them at our auditions," said Isitt.

"I'm absolutely delighted to be working with our sweet and funny young cast and the incredibly talented and hilariously funny musical theatre cast who are going to be brilliant."

After its Birmingham run (until November 12), the show is going on tour to cities including Sheffield, Manchester, Plymouth and Leeds, before a London run which will include a live cinema screening.

The cast includes West End regular Simon Lipkin (Avenue Q, Spamalot, Guys and Dolls) as the barmy Mr Poppy and Daniel Boys as Mr Maddens (Avenue Q and TV's Any Dream Will Do).

For tickets see Birmingham-rep.co.uk or call 0121 236 4455.

Civic is back with rock icons Placebo

The gig of the week has to be between the return of Wolverhampton Civic Hall with goth icons Placebo on Saturday night and the ice cool London Grammar at Birmingham O2 Academy on Monday.

London band Placebo, fronted by Brian Molko, pictured, burst onto the music scene 20 years ago with Nancy Boy and went on to work with David Bowie and REM's Michael Stipe. They released seven studio albums, won loyal followings in the UK and France and had hit singles with Pure Morning, You Don't Care About Us and Every You Every Me from their classic Without You I'm Nothing album.

London Grammar, fronted by Hannah Reid, won acclaim for their debut album If You Wait and hit single Strong in 2013, and released second album Truth Is A Beautiful Thing this summer. They will be supported by LA outfit Lo Moon for the sold out Birmingham show.

It's all going on at the O2 Academy tomorrow (Friday) with Dizzee Rascal in the main room and Roachford and Gabrielle Aplin (sold out) in the venue's other rooms. At the same venue Grammy Award-winers Train have sold out their show on Saturday, Atlanta rapper Future plays on Sunday, Marmozets on Monday, The Horrors on Tuesday and Zara Larsson on Wednesday.

Over at the 02 Institute in Digbeth, Bewdley's Becky Hill has sold out her Friday night gig. Metronomy play the venue on Saturday, the same night as MOBO winner Shaka.

Californian singer BANKS visits on Sunday. Electro-punk duo Sleaford Mods play next Thursday.

Emeli Sandé heads to Birmingham's Genting Arena on Wednesday, in support of her second studio album Long Live The Angels.

In Wolverhampton young punks Cabbage play the Slade Rooms tomorrow, whilst WASP celebrate the 25th anniversary of their album The Crimson Idol at the Wulfrun Hall. Former Stranglers frontman Hugh Cornwell is at the Wulfrun on Saturday.

The South play the music of The Beautiful South and feature one of that band's former singers, Alison Wheeler, at Bilston's Robin 2 on Sunday.

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03	Annie	225.00
10	Les Miserables	225.00
17	42nd Street or American in Paris	225.00
24	Lion King including River Cruise with Lunch	235.00

DECEMBER	SHOW	PRICE £
01	Aladdin or Lion King	225.00
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SATURDAY'S TV OCTOBER 21

CHOICE

Kit Harington

Gunpowder (BBC1, 9.10pm)

New series. In 1603, following the death of Elizabeth I, King James of Scotland claims the English throne, and the country goes to war with Catholic Spain. As a result, English Catholics are persecuted and driven into hiding, but after witnessing the brutal means by which the Crown intends to punish his people for practicing their faith, recusant Catholic Robert Catesby devises a treasonous plot to assassinate King James. However, he must first enlist the aid of stalwart allies, and heads to Brussels to seek the help of a hardened war veteran named Guy Fawkes. Three-part historical drama, starring Kit Harington as Catesby – his own ancestor – alongside Liv Tyler, Mark Gatiss, Derek Riddell and Tom Cullen.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** The Hairy Bikers' Comfort Food. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **2.45 Film:** Madagascar. (2005) Animated comedy, with the voice of Ben Stiller. **4.05** Final Score. **5.25** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** Pointless Celebrities.

6.35 Strictly Come Dancing. Twelve couples remain as the annual dancing competition enters its fifth weekend. The pressure to put in a flawless performance remains as high as ever, as the duos once again take to the stage to demonstrate the routines they have been practising throughout the week. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman are on hand to oversee proceedings, as judges Shirley Ballas, Darcey Bussell, Bruno Tonioli and Craig Revel Horwood share their thoughts on the couples' steps.

8.20 Casualty. Connie distracts herself from her personal problems by trying to get to the bottom of the squabbles between Dylan, David and Louise, who have been in conflict over Dylan's decision to smuggle Sanosi into the UK. Meanwhile, Lily is made uneasy by the natural chemistry between Sam and Iain, who she discovers have a romantic history together, and Max tries to deliver bad news to mortuary assistant Tara, whose new squeeze seems to have a troubling secret.

9.10 Gunpowder. New series. Historical drama telling the story of the 1603 plot concocted by Robert Catesby and his Catholic co-conspirators to kill James I. Starring Kit Harington and Liv Tyler.

10.10 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.30 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Chelsea v Watford at Stamford Bridge and Huddersfield Town v Manchester United at the John Smith's Stadium. Watford started the season in fine form to take their place in the top half of the table, and were expected to provide an stern examination of Chelsea's title credentials.

12.00 The NFL Show. **12.30** The Weight Cut: Extreme Weight Loss. **1.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.45 Animal Park Summer Special. (R) **7.30** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. (R) **8.00** Deadly 60. (R) **8.30** Show Me What You're Made Of. (R) **9.00** Saturday Mash-Up! **11.00** Walrus: Two Tonne Tusker – Natural World. (R) **12.00** Rick Stein's Long Weekends. (R) **1.00** Grand Tours of the Scottish Islands. (R) **2.00** Coast. (R) **3.00** Flog It! (R) **4.00** Mastermind. (R) **4.30** The Big Family Cooking Showdown. (R) **5.30** Anglesey: Island Life.

6.00 Gardeners' World. Monty Don advises on what plants need protection and how to nurture tender plants over the coming months. Plus, Carol Klein celebrates ornamental grasses. Including Weather. (R)

7.00 Coastal Path. Explorer Paul Rose takes in the north Cornish coast, touring Tintagel Castle, experiencing the hustle and bustle of Padstow's 'Obby 'Oss festival, and visiting St Ives. (R)

7.30 Front Row. Darcey Bussell celebrates the legacy of choreographer Kenneth Macmillan, and Stig Abell interviews Philip Pullman about his new novel The Book of Dust: La Belle Sauvage.

8.00 Britain Afloat. Mary-Ann Ochota examines the prevalence of the punt, the flat-bottomed vessels first set afloat in the Bronze Age. (R)

8.30 Dad's Army. The air-raid wardens have to share the church hall with the Home Guard after their HQ is bombed, but Hodges' men are terribly disruptive and soon cause mayhem. (R)

9.00 Lucy Worsley's Nights at the Opera. The presenter details how Bizet's Carmen, Puccini's La Boheme, Wagner's Ring Cycle and Richard Strauss's Salome swept away operatic conventions in the 19th and early-20th centuries.

10.00 QI XL. With Bill Bailey, Phill Jupitus and Claudia Winkleman.

10.45 Later – with Jools Holland. With Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott, Wolf Alice, Grizzly Bear, Sza and RL Boyce.

11.50 Film: In Our Name. (2010) A British soldier is haunted by her experiences in Iraq, and becomes increasingly paranoid about her daughter's safety. Drama, starring Joanne Froggatt and Mel Raido.

1.15 Film: In the Dark Half. (2012) **2.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **9.25** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.20** Gino's Italian Escape – Islands in the Sun. (R) **11.50** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **12.50** ITV News; Weather. **1.00** ITV Racing: Live from Ascot. Coverage of today's race meeting at Ascot. **5.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **5.30** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R)

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.05 ITV News; Weather.

6.20 Cannonball.

7.20 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Bradley Walsh invites Jamie Theakston, Faye Tozer, Ben Cohen and Sara Pascoe to take part in the quiz, with thousands of pounds in charity donations up for grabs.

8.20 The X Factor – Judges' Houses. Dermot O'Leary presents as the contest enters the judges' houses stage, which sees the 24 remaining would-be stars jetting off to exotic locales for a taste of the glamour that comes with international stardom. This time, the Boys accompany Louis Walsh to Istanbul, while the Girls follow Sharon Osbourne to San Francisco. Simon Cowell takes the Groups to his villa Chateau Diter near Cannes, and Nicole Scherzinger takes the Overs to South Africa. Each group will receive mentoring from some of the judges' closest confidants, as former X Factor judge Cheryl returns to mentor Simon's ensembles, and Jack and Kelly Osbourne help their mother Sharon with the girls. Nicole will be enlisting the aid of UK grime star Stormzy, while Louis' lads will be mentored by Brit Award-winning singer Mika.

10.15 The Jonathan Ross Show.

11.25 ITV News; Weather.

11.45 Film: Mickey Blue Eyes. (1999)

1.30 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Mobil 1 The Grid. **6.40** Triathlon: Hever Castle. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. **9.55** The Big Bang Theory. **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. **10.50** The Simpsons. (R) **11.20** The Simpsons. (R) **11.50** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.20** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.50** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.20** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.50** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **2.50** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **3.50** Best Laid Plans. **4.55** Formula 1 United States Grand Prix Practice 3 Live. Further coverage from the 17th round of the season at Circuit of the Americas in Texas.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Rivers with Jeremy Paxman. The presenter explores the Severn, Britain's longest river, which flows through both England and Wales. Along the way, he visits the largest ship graveyard in the country, meets the last practitioners of an unusual form of fishing, and takes part in a coracle regatta. He finally reaches the source of the river, where he meets a local poet. (R)

8.00 Hidden Britain by Drone. Tony Robinson presents the first of two programmes using drones to shoot aerial footage of areas of Britain that are off limits to the public. Among the locations featured is a village on Salisbury Plain that is not listed on any maps, and is used by the military for training. The drones record an exercise involving tanks storming the area. Other sites include the world's most advanced container port, a Second World War bunker, an abandoned airbase that once housed nuclear weapons, and an 18th-century mansion belonging to a Russian billionaire. (R)

9.00 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix Qualifying Live. Coverage of the qualifying session (Start-time 10.00pm), as the drivers contest starting grid positions at Circuit of the Americas in Texas, ahead of the 17th round of the season. Presented by Steve Jones, with analysis by David Coulthard, Mark Webber and Eddie Jordan.

11.35 Film: The Iceman. (2012) Fact-based crime drama, starring Michael Shannon

1.25 The Last Leg. (R) **2.20** Hollyoaks. **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.10** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.45** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.40** Police Interceptors: Future Crime. (R) **12.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.40** The A-Team. (R) **2.40** The A-Team. (R) **3.40** The A-Team. (R) **4.40** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **5.40** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Documentary giving an insight into cash-strapped Britain from the perspectives of debtors, creditors and those who collect the payments, including High Court enforcement bailiffs and repossession teams. The series follows each case as it unfolds, recording the thoughts and feelings on both sides, the process of repossession and the impact it has on all involved. (R)

6.40 Film: The Bridge at Remagen. (1969) As Allied forces prepare for a major assault on Germany, a small unit of American soldiers is sent to capture a strategically important bridge over the Rhine – but German forces are determined to prevent the Allied advance, and seek to destroy it. Second World War adventure, starring George Segal, Robert Vaughn, Ben Gazzara and Bradford Dillman. Edited for language.

7.40 5 News Update.

7.45 Film: The Bridge at Remagen. (1969) Concluded.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Bristol City v Leeds United at Ashton Gate, Middlesbrough v Cardiff City at Riverside Stadium, and Millwall v Birmingham City at The Den.

10.00 Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, including Shrewsbury Town v Fleetwood Town, and Carlisle United v Notts County.

10.30 Film: Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls. (1995) The eccentric pet detective is coaxed out of exile in a Buddhist monastery to search for a missing sacred bat in the African jungle. Comedy sequel, with Jim Carrey and Simon Callow. Edited for sexual content and language.

12.10 SuperCasino. **3.10** Notorious: The Philpott Fire – 5 Years On. (R) **4.00** Killer Schoolgirl: Countdown to Murder. (R) **4.50** Great Scientists. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 The Incredible Human Journey **8.00** Wild China **9.00** Beck: The Family **10.30** Beck: The Invasion **12.00** Top of the Pops: 1984 **1.20** Sound of Cinema: The Music That Made the Movies **2.20** Wild China **3.20** Close

ITV2

11.25 The X Factor: Six Chair Challenge **1.30** Take Me Out **2.55 Film:** What a Girl Wants (2003) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05 Film:** What a Girl Wants (2003) **5.05 Film:** Liar Liar (1997) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10 Film:** Liar Liar (1997) **6.45 Film:** The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50 Film:** The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) **10.20** Celebrity Juice **11.05** Family Guy **12.00** American Dad! **12.55** Timewasters **1.30** Bromans **2.25** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.15 FYI Daily **11.20 Film:** The Nun's Story (1959) **12.55** Lewis **2.55** Foyle's War **7.00** Midsomer Murders **11.00** Lewis **1.00** On the Buses **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

12.00 Football Rivalries **12.10** The Darts Show **12.45** World Series of Darts Live: Germany. Coverage of the opening session of the second day of the inaugural staging of the tournament. **5.00** Nijinsky's Triple Crown **5.05** Pawn Stars **7.00** World Series of Darts Live: Germany. Coverage of the semi-finals and final of the inaugural staging of the tournament. **11.00 Film:** Conan the Destroyer (1984) **12.00** FYI Daily **12.05 Film:** Conan the Destroyer (1984) **1.05** The Sweeney **2.05** The Classic Car Show **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.30** The Goldbergs **3.00** Don't Tell the Bride **4.00** The Great British Bake Off **5.15** The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Die Hard (1988) **11.40** Gogglebox **1.50** Rude Tube **3.15** Tattoo Fixers **4.10** How I Met Your Mother **4.55** Rude(ish) Tube

Film4

11.00 Siege of the Saxons (1963) **1.00** Step Up 4: Miami Heat (2012) **2.55** Marmaduke (2010) **4.40** The House of Magic (2013) **6.20** Hulk (2003) Comic-book adventure, starring Eric Bana. **9.00** Thor (2011) Fantasy adventure, starring Chris Hemsworth. **11.15** Machete Kills (2013) **1.25** The Hole (2009) **3.20** Close

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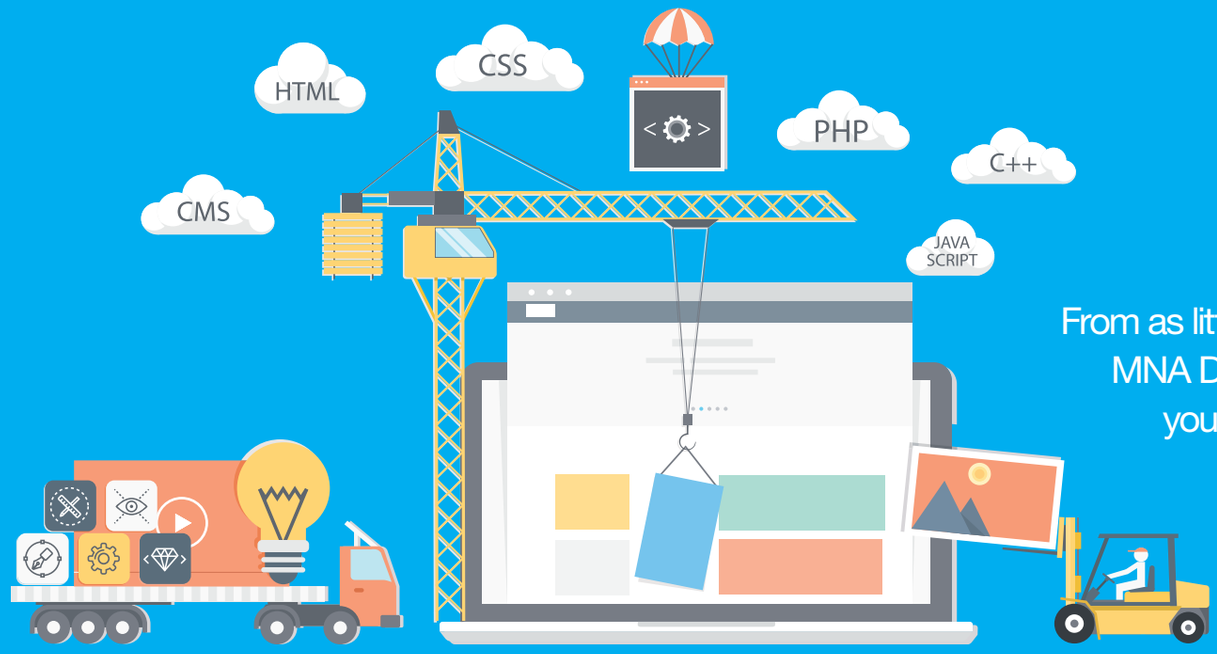

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SUNDAY'S TV OCTOBER 22

CHOICE

Angela Scanlon

Robot Wars (BBC2, 8pm)
New series. Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present a new format for the contest. Among the new twists are a new hazard that fills the arena with fog, Robot Redemption rounds, in which losing teams have a chance to get back into the contest, and the show's biggest ever battle, the Ten Robot Rumble, in which 10 teams battle to the death with no time limit.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.25** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Points of View. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Eat Well for Less? (R) **5.50** BBC News.
6.05 Regional Programme.
6.15 Countryfile. John Craven and Margherita Taylor present the show from Cornwall, where they attend a food festival dedicated to using every part of an animal, visit a vineyard with unusual origins, and meet a writer who is trying to preserve the Cornish language. Plus, Adam Henson reports on soya farming and Tom Heap examines calls to suspend public rights of way.
7.15 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present the results of last night's public vote, which is combined with the judges' scores to reveal the two lowest scoring couples. Both pairs will compete in a dance-off to decide which of them will be eliminated from the contest. With music from Irish rock band the Script.
8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Senate House in Bloomsbury, where experts meet a man who has flown in from Antwerp to get a carved whale bone scrimshaw valued. Other items featured in the show include a brick that survived the Great Fire of London and a stuffed artist's model used by some of 19th-century Paris's most famous painters.
9.00 The Last Post. Drama about military police and their families in a 1960s British colony on the Red Sea coast.
10.00 BBC News.
10.20 Regional Programme.
10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Tottenham Hotspur v Liverpool at Wembley Stadium and Everton v Arsenal at Goodison Park.
11.30 NFL Highlights. Arizona Cardinals v Los Angeles Rams. Caroline Barker introduces action.
12.30 Weather for the Week Ahead.
12.35 BBC News.

BBC2

6.35 Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.35** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Joan Fontaine: Talking Pictures. (R) **1.30 Film:** Suspicion. (1941) Alfred Hitchcock's thriller, starring Cary Grant. **3.05** Northern Italy Unpacked. (R) **4.05** Flog It! **5.00** H is for Hawk: A New Chapter – Natural World. (R)
6.00 Top Gear. Chris Harris and Sabine Schmitz compete in a buggy race across the Californian desert that is one of the toughest events in motorsport, and Matt LeBlanc test drives new supercar the Ford GT. (R)
7.00 Colombia with Simon Reeve. The presenter explores the country as 50 years of civil war draws to a close in the wake of a recently signed peace deal. He meets guerrilla fighters who have pledged to lay down arms, but also discovers a negative consequence of their disarming, as the paramilitary gangs that control the drugs trade grow in power. Simon travels through the country with coca farmers, who discuss the government support they will need in the turbulent times ahead, as poverty and land ownership becoming pressing issues. (R)
8.00 Robot Wars. New series. Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present a new format for the contest featuring a Ten Robot Rumble, in which 10 teams battle to the death with no time limit.
9.00 Louis Theroux: Dark States – Murder In Milwaukee. The reporter examines gun crime and racial tensions in the US city, meeting the police department's homicide officers and families of people who have been shot. Last in the series.
10.00 Snowfall. Franklin is determined to recover his stolen money and get revenge on the people who took it, and Leon knows someone who might be able to help him achieve his goals.
10.45 Mock the Week. James Acaster, Ed Byrne, Gary Delaney, Ivo Graham and Zoe Lyons join host Dara O Briain and regular Hugh Dennis for the comedy show. (R)
11.20 Film: Glory. (1989)
1.15 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.15** Holby City. (R) **3.15** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Ben 10. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! (R) **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Australian Wilderness with Ray Mears. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **10.55** Amazing Animal Births. (R) **11.25** Robson Green's Coastal Lives. (R) **11.55** Bigheads. (R) **12.55** ITV News; Weather. **1.00** The X Factor – Judges' Houses. (R) **2.55 Film:** Mr Bean's Holiday. (2007) **4.35** Victoria. (R) **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** ITV News; Weather.
6.00 Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. Ben Shephard invites Katie Price, Alison Hammond and Marc Baylis to take part in a special edition of the quiz show, in which they must answer questions to win turns on an arcade-style machine. Dropping tokens down a choice of four chutes, they hope to knock piles of them off a moving shelf – and the more they collect, the better their chances of collecting the £20,000 prize for their selected charity.
7.00 The X Factor – Judges' Houses. The Judges' House phase continues, with the acts jetting off overseas to perform for their mentors in the hope of winning a place in the live shows. Each coach has a guest judge on hand to help them – Louis Walsh and Mika assess the boys in Istanbul, Simon Cowell and Cheryl teach the groups in France, Nicole Scherzinger and Stormzy take the overs to South Africa, and Sharon Osbourne is joined by her children Jack and Kelly to oversee the girls in San Francisco.
9.00 Your Song. Emma Willis presents a one-off special in which members of the public receive private performances from their favourite stars, including Rita Ora, Paloma Faith and James Arthur.
10.00 ITV News; Weather.
10.15 Peston on Sunday. Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston and Allegra Stratton. (R)
11.15 Liar. (R)
12.10 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Kevin Can Wait. **6.45** Kevin Can Wait. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie's Quick & Easy Food. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00 Film:** Rango. (2011) Oscar-winning animated comedy, with the voice of Johnny Depp. **4.10** The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Specials. (R) **5.15** The Great British Bake Off. (R)
6.35 Channel 4 News.
7.00 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix Live Build-Up. A look ahead to today's Grand Prix, which takes place at Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas, and serves as the 17th round of the season. Presented by Steve Jones.
7.35 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix Live. Steve Jones presents coverage of the 17th race of the season (Start-time 8.00pm), held at Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas. Lewis Hamilton has dominated the second half of the campaign, as main rival Sebastian Vettel has been beset by problems. The Mercedes driver could clinch the drivers' title this evening, starting the race with a 59-point cushion, although there are still 100 points available, and victory for Vettel would narrow the gap ahead the next race in Mexico. With analysis by David Coulthard, Mark Webber and Eddie Jordan.
10.10 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix Live Reaction. Steve Jones, David Coulthard, Mark Webber and Eddie Jordan analyse this evening's race, which served as the 17th round of the season.
11.15 Film: Child 44. (2015) A secret police agent in 1950s Russia hunts for a serial child murderer in the face of an official cover-up. Detective thriller, starring Tom Hardy and Gary Oldman.
1.40 Travel Man: 48 Hours in Lisbon. (R) **2.05** Britain's Ancient Tracks with Tony Robinson. The Time Team presenter treks along the ancient Roman road, Dere Street. Last in the series. (R) **3.00** Gillette World Sport. Global sports action. **3.30** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **3.55** Mobil 1 The Grid. (R) **4.25** Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer help two first-time buyers. (R) **5.20** Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free. (R) **5.35** Countdown. With Adrian Chiles in Dictionary Corner. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Poppy Cat. **6.10** Little Princess. (R) **6.25** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.35** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.45** Simon. (R) **6.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.55** Wissper. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.20** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.30** Fireman Sam. **8.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.40** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **9.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **10.00** The Great South Run 2017. **12.15** The A-Team. (R) **1.15** The A-Team. (R) **2.15** The A-Team. (R) **3.20** The A-Team. (R) **4.20 Film:** Daddy Day Camp. (2007) Comedy sequel, starring Cuba Gooding Jr. **5.20** 5 News Update. **5.25 Film:** Daddy Day Camp. (2007) Concluded.
6.05 5 News Weekend.
6.10 Film: Left Behind. (2014) The world is plunged into chaos when millions of people suddenly disappear. An airline pilot tries to save the remaining passengers on his flight, while on the ground, his daughter tries to find out if her mother and brother are among those who have vanished. Fantasy adventure based on the series of novels by Jerry B Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, starring Nicolas Cage and Lea Thompson.
8.05 Film: Poseidon. (2006) A cruise ship capsizes in a tidal wave on New Year's Eve. A small band of survivors, including a professional gambler, a father searching for his missing daughter, a stowaway and a suicidal man who has regained his will to live, battles to get to the surface and escape the sinking vessel. Remake of 1970s disaster movie The Poseidon Adventure, starring Kurt Russell, Richard Dreyfuss and Josh Lucas.
9.05 5 News Update.
9.10 Film: Poseidon. (2006) Concluded.
10.00 Film: 2012. (2009) A scientist learns the world is soon to face a global cataclysm that will wipe out the human race, but finds the US president has plans to secretly save a fraction of the population, leaving everyone else to die. A writer learns of this scheme, and as the world is devastated by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, he tries to get his family to the last safe refuge. Disaster movie, with John Cusack.
1.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Paddington Station 24/7. (R) **4.00** Cruising with Jane McDonald. (R) **4.50** Great Scientists. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Only Connect **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Jacqueline du Pre: A Gift Beyond Words **9.00** Hamlet from Glyndebourne **11.50** Jacqueline du Pré plays Dvorak's Cello Concerto **12.40** Classic Cellists at the BBC **1.40** The Brontes at the BBC **2.40** The Story of Scottish Art **3.40** Close
ITV2
11.05 2Awesome: Ready, Set, Style **11.35** 2Awesome: Third Wheel **11.50** Take Me Out **12.50** Harry Hill's Alien Fun Capsule **1.25 Film:** Yogi Bear (2010) **2.25** FYI Daily **2.30 Film:** Yogi Bear (2010) **3.00 Film:** Corpse Bride (2005) **4.05** FYI Daily **4.10 Film:** Corpse Bride (2005) **4.45 Film:** The Haunted Mansion (2003) **5.45** FYI Daily **5.50 Film:** The Haunted Mansion (2003) **6.25 Film:** The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002) **7.25** FYI Daily **7.30 Film:** The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002) **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** The Cleveland Show **1.00** Through the Keyhole **2.00** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
12.45 Film: The Railway Children (1970) **1.50** FYI Daily **1.55 Film:** The Railway Children (1970) **3.00 Film:** Columbo: Agenda for Murder (1990) **5.05** Lewis **7.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** The Syndicate **10.05** Honest **11.10 Film:** Bridget Jones's Diary (2001) **12.20** FYI Daily **12.25 Film:** Bridget Jones's Diary (2001) **1.10** The Knock **2.05** Mr Selfridge **2.55** Lewis **4.30** Judge Judy **5.10** On the Buses **5.40** ITV3 Nightscreen
ITV4
11.00 Shed and Buried **11.55** Pawn Stars **12.50 Film:** Lonely Are the Brave (1962) **1.50** FYI Daily **1.55 Film:** Lonely Are the Brave (1962) **3.00 Film:** Rio Bravo (1959) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05 Film:** Rio Bravo (1959) **5.50** Hornblower **8.00** The Chase Celebrity Special **9.00 Film:** Last Man Standing (1996) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** Last Man Standing (1996) **11.05** Car Crash Global: Caught on Camera **12.05 Film:** United 93 (2006) **1.05** FYI Daily **1.10 Film:** United 93 (2006) **2.15** Tommy Cooper **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
11.00 Made in Chelsea **12.00** Don't Tell the Bride **1.00 Film:** Captain Ron (1992) **3.00** The Goldbergs **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Pitch Perfect (2012) **11.15** Naked Attraction **12.20** Tattoo Fixers **1.25** Rude Tube **2.30** Don't Tell the Bride **3.20** Hollyoaks

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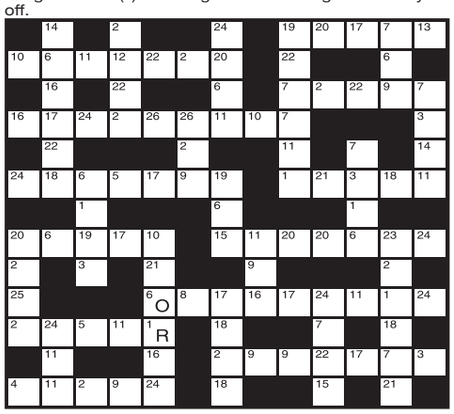
No.452

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



1 R	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6 O	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1 Q	2 Z	3 L	4 T	5 U	6 P	7 F	8 H	9 D	10 B	11 M	12 C	13 J
14 A	15 S	16 E	17 O	18 N	19 K	20 Y	21 I	22 G	23 X	24 V	25 R	26 W

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

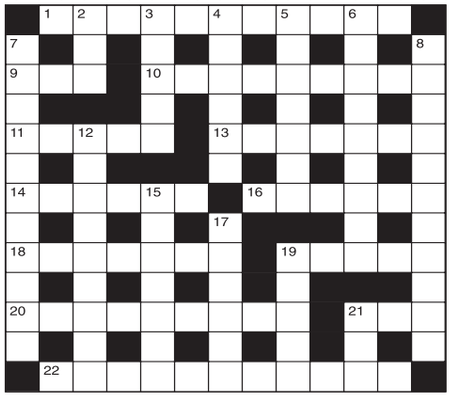
Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Centre cross is made with precision (11)
9. Steal from Roy? (3)
10. Fill up net in abundance (9)
11. Foreign article includes untruth (5)
13. Do they obliterate series of games? (7)
14. Danger where things grow (6)
16. Softening of elevations and depressions? (6)
18. Somehow brings streams under control (7)
19. Wise men for a long time in the ship (5)
20. Ran back to sailor telling story (9)
21. Reverence for article you and I have (3)
22. Mine got more into the assembly place (7-4)

Down

2. Alternative letter in sphere (3)
3. Libertine half seen to mature (5)
4. Makes happier - usually three at a time (6)
5. Distinguished for being unskilled (7)
6. Grief's fun when in pain! (9)
7. Great manner for organisation (11)
8. Parsimonious and prepared to fight, perhaps (5-6)
12. Held back through shyness? (2,7)
15. A gentle, refined disposition (7)
17. Appoint as indication (6)
19. Put up to play jokes on you and me as a sweetener (5)
21. Bother about the year that never was? (3)



Quick Clues:

Across

1. Have new owner (6,5)
9. Skill (3)
10. Likeness (9)
11. Swarthy (5)
13. Dexterity (7)
14. Give work to (6)
16. Reach (6)
18. Ease (7)
19. Open (5)
20. Issuing (9)
21. In the past (3)
22. Alarmingly (11)

Down

2. Very warm (3)
3. Objectionable (5)
4. Entangle (6)
5. Disease (7)
6. Blacken (9)
7. Unfeeling (4-7)
8. Journey's end (11)
12. Entreating (9)
15. Outdoor (4-3)
17. Disclaimer (6)
19. Instrument (5)
21. Everything (3)

Sudoku

	4	6			2	1		
1				9		6		
			3				7	8
5		2	9					
	6		2		1		8	
		1			7	9		2
	1				8			
		7		4			5	9
	5	3	7			2	4	

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:

3	4	2	6	5	8	7	9	1
5	1	6	9	4	7	3	8	2
8	9	7	1	3	2	5	4	6
2	5	9	3	6	4	8	1	7
6	8	1	5	7	9	2	3	4
7	3	4	8	2	1	9	6	5
4	7	8	2	1	3	6	5	9
9	2	5	4	8	6	1	7	3
1	6	3	7	9	5	4	2	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Elms; 3 Indolent; 9 Rhyming; 10 Error; 11 Perfect pitch; 13 Alight; 15 Agreed; 17 Ten-gallon hat; 20 Extra; 21 Indulge; 22 Tear-drop; 23 Asps.
Down: 1 European; 2 Mayor; 4 Nights; 5 Opening words; 6 Earache; 7 Tory; 8 Rider Haggard; 12 Editress; 14 Inertia; 16 Albino; 18 Holds; 19 Left.
QUICK - Across: 1 Sobs; 3 Allusion; 9 Respond; 10 Admit; 11 Misadventure; 13 Lessen; 15 Willow; 17 Complication; 20 Upper; 21 Baleful; 22 Strident; 23 Arid.
Down: 1 Scramble; 2 Basis; 4 Ledger; 5 Unattainable; 6 Immoral; 7 Note; 8 Good-tempered; 12 Dwindled; 14 Stopper; 16 Ribbon; 18 Infer; 19 Fuss.

Quiz

1. Of which range is Mount Toubkal the highest mountain?
2. Which dynasty's family home is at Hyannis Port?
3. How old was Anna Paquin when she won an Oscar?
4. Which Thomas Mann novel is set in a Swiss sanatorium?
5. Which Italian monk was born Giovanni di Bernardone?
6. Which British animator has won four Oscars?
7. Of which band was Brian Jones an original member?
8. In British folklore, which fairy rules over men's dreams?
9. Whose palace of Nonsuch was excavated at Epson in 1959?
10. In which South American city did Lady Thatcher pass out during a speech?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 David Platt; 2 Horatio Nelson; 3 Basic English; 4 Antelope; 5 The rand; 6 North Korea; 7 Volkswagen; 8 Greta Garbo; 9 Bloomsbury Group; 10 Conkers.

Niner: GRANDIOSE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

92486 gives a seaside feature,
1567 gives a second seaside feature,
623183 gives a third seaside feature.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Landscaped rear garden a feature of detached bungalow

An outstanding modern detached bungalow, 23 Chapel Street,Wordsley, Stourbridge, comes with two large bedrooms and a refitted luxury kitchen and shower room.

Also featuring a large driveway and an impressive lounge with French doors opening to the beautifully landscaped rear garden, it is for sale through Taylors at £229,950.

The rear garden has a large patio area, lawns, a timber shed and summer house, with the summer house available by separate negotiation. Ideal for those looking for a bungalow which you can move straight into, viewings are essential for the spacious layout to be appreciated.

With double glazing and gas central heating, in more detail there is a porch and an L-shaped reception hall with built-in storage. French doors from the large attractive lounge open out to the rear garden patio.

The beautifully re-fitted kitchen has a range of cream gloss finish units with woodblock-style worktops. It has an integrated Whirlpool slimline dishwasher, integrated washing machine and integrated Whirlpool electric hob.

The large master bedroom has a window overlooking the property's frontage. The well-proportioned second bedroom also has a window to the front. The luxury refitted shower room has a classic white suite with chrome colour fittings.

There is a wash basin with vanity unit and mixer tap, push button flush WC, part tiling to the walls, an extractor fan and tiled flooring.

Outside, the impressive bungalow is set well back from the road beyond the large tarmac driveway which has an attractive block paved edge and newly laid front lawn alongside. There is a broad pathway which leads alongside the property to the double timber gates which open to the beautifully landscaped garden.

Again all just recently landscaped to include a natural stone full-width paved patio area with security sensor light and wall light point above and attractive block paved edge. The rear garden has a private aspect together with a traditional brick rear boundary wall.

WORDSLEY £229,950

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KEY FEATURES

- Modern bungalow
- Detached
- 3 large bedrooms
- Refitted luxury kitchen & shower room
- Large driveway

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High Park Crescent, Sedgley — OIRO £399,950
2 | 4 | 2 | EPC D

Gate Street, SEDGLEY — £299,950
2 | 5 | 3 | EPC D

Keats Close, The Straits — £239,950
1/2 | 1/2 | 1 | EPC D

Aylesford Close, Sedgley — OIRO £215,000
1 | 3 | 1 | EPC D

Swallowfields Road, Sedgley — £199,950
1 | 3 | 1 | EPC D

Stretton Place, Woodcross — Auction Guide Price £100,000
1 | 3 | 1 | EPC D

Highland Road, Cradley Heath — £170,000
2 | 3 | 1 | EPC E

Ivyhouse Lane, Coseley — £145,000
1 | 2 | 1 | EPC E

South Oval, Upper Gornal — £130,000
1 | 3 | 1 | EPC D

School Street, Sedgley — £129,950
2 | 2 | 1 | EPC E

Sycamore Green, Old Park Farm — £129,950
1 | 3 | 1 | EPC TBC

Kinfare Rise, Upper Gornal — £72,500
1 | 2 | 1 | EPC C

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Offers in the region of £329,950

LOWER GORNAL, The Straits

ENLARGED, gas centrally heated, double glazed detached two/three bedroom within walking distance of many amenities comprising; porch, hall, bedroom with wardrobes, study (occasional third bedroom), refitted dining kitchen with 'high gloss white' finish units, utility, bathroom, second bedroom, inner vestibule, dressing room with a fine range of first quality units, shower/wet room, LARGE GARAGE, neat garden. EPC:E. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £237,950

DUDLEY, Hopton Gardens, Earls Keep

STYLISH - Enviably situated! Imposing head of cul-de-sac location with lengthy foregarden and tremendous distant views; a stunning & significantly enhanced freehold gas centrally heated double glazed detached having entrance hallway, through living/dining room (bay to rear and enlarged bay to front), kitchen, utility section, cloakroom. Principal bedroom with 'walk through' wardrobe section and shower room en suite, two further bedrooms (one with built in wardrobes), bathroom with white suite, garage, delightful landscaped gardens. EPC: D. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £218,000

KINGSWINFORD, Ploverdale Crescent

An IMMACULATELY PRESENTED and BEAUTIFULLY IMPROVED DETACHED FAMILY HOME which is superbly located, gently elevated back beyond the LARGE DRIVEWAY with CAR PORT, GARAGE and a beautifully laid out private rear garden, including FOUR GOOD BEDROOMS with ENSUITE. EPC D

Price: £279,950

LOWER GORNAL, The Alley

Situated on corner position in the popular area of Lower Gornal this DETACHED property is within walking distance of Gornal Village. As well as having gas central heating & double glazing this family home also boasts; hall, living room, dining room, fitted-kitchen, THREE BEDROOMS, stunning shower room, detached garage, greenhouse, gardens to front side & rear with parking for multiple vehicles. VIEWING ESSENTIAL. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £234,950

LOWER GORNAL, The Straits

SPACIOUS, gas centrally heated, double glazed detached constructed in the 1970's to replicate a 'cottage' which formally occupied this site with GOOD DISTANT VIEWS & within walking distance of the village comprising 22'2" lounge (with brick fireplace incorporating old beam), 15ft dining kitchen, store, original cellar, side lobby. Three bedrooms, bathroom. Large garage/workshop, extensive parking, garden. EPC:E SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £230,000

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New price

Offers in Excess of £215,000

SEDGLEY, Eversley Grove, Northway

MAGNIFICENT GARDEN (with substantial garden-room). Tremendously enhanced, Freehold, gas centrally heated, double glazed two (previously three) semi-detached providing hallway, store, lounge, dining room,kitchen, principal bedroom & further double bedroom (both with fitted units) bathroom, boarded roof space. Driveway, lengthy garden EPC: D SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £195,000

DUDLEY, Wexford Close, Milking Bank

An EXTENDED & UPGRADED, Freehold, gas centrally heated, uPVC double glazed & well insulated detached ENVIABLY SITUATED at head of cul-de-sac with open aspect. Accommodation includes; entrance hall, lounge with WOODBURNER, enlarged transverse dining room, conservatory, lobby, fitted cloakroom, kitchen, Three bedrooms, reappointed bathroom with white contemporary style suite. Delightful sheltered garden. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £190,000

ETTINGSHALL PARK, Dovedale Road

EXCEPTIONALLY SPACIOUS WITH THREE DOUBLE BEDROOMS! - (largest semi detached on the estate) a conscientiously maintained gas centrally heated UPVC double glazed in favoured neighbourhood comprising reception hall, pantry, lounge with bay, dining room, enlarged kitchen. Large landing THREE DOUBLE BEDROOMS, upgraded/retiled bathroom with white suite, garage, delightful sheltered garden. EPC Rating TBC. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £178,500

COSELEY, Clifton Street, Hurst Hill

EXTENDED - APPRECIABLY SPACIOUS! Gas centrally heated, double glazed semi detached 'cottage' of character that has been transformed, enlarged & improved enviably situated with panoramic distant views comprising; sitting room, lounge with multi fuel stove, tremendous extended breakfast kitchen (with lofty ceiling heights) double French doors out to the garden and a fine range of units, shower room. THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom. Off road parking, garden. EPC: D SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £170,000

DUDLEY, Ripley Grove

Meticulously maintained, Freehold, gas centrally heated, double glazed intermediate 'starter home' with superb distant views at head of cul-de-sac briefly comprising; hall, fitted cloakroom, kitchen with range of high gloss cream finish units & integrated appliances, living/dining room (with double French doors out to the garden), store. Two double bedrooms (one with double wardrobes),shower room (potential bathroom). Delightful rear garden, parking. EPC C. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £150,000

COSELEY, Chad Road, Bramford estate

NO UPWARD CHAIN Superbly presented, conscientiously maintained semi-detached property upon the extremely popular BRAMFORD ESTATE. Benefiting from gas central heating & double glazing this EXTENDED family home also benefits from, porch, hall, through lounge -diner, fitted-kitchen, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom, garage, drive and garden to front with attractive enclosed rear garden. ●●●MINE SEARCH AVAILABLE●●● EPC: C SEDGLEY

PRICE: £139,950

WOODSETTON, Marlborough Road

A wonderfully presented intermediate residence located in the popular area of Woodsetton, Benefiting from gas central heating and double glazing this good-sized family home also comprises of; porch, living room, kitchen-diner, guest W/C. THREE BEDROOMS, family bathroom, en-bloc garage, enclosed rear garden with gardens to fore. EPC: C SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £134,950

DUDLEY, Old Park Road

An EXTENDED UPVC double glazed gas centrally heated (not tested) for improvement offering potential. Accommodation includes reception hall, under stair store, living room with bay, extended l shape 18'3" reception room, extended l shape 14'9" kitchen and a CONSERVATORY beyond, three bedrooms, shower room, potential off road parking, lengthy rear garden. EPC Rating D. SEDGLEY.

Price: £125,000

SEDGLEY, Kings Road

A traditional freehold gas centrally heated majority UPVC double glazed intermediate terrace with a number of period features (strip pine doors/cast fireplaces) that has been modernised and refurbished but offers further potential. Dining room, lounge, enlarged refitted kitchen with 'light beech' units, two bedrooms, reappointed bathroom with white suite, brick store, sheltered rear garden abutting onto school grounds. EPC Rating TBC. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £115,000

WOMBOURNE, Lamb Crescent

An IMPRESSIVELY SPACIOUS FIRST FLOOR MAISONETTE which is superbly located, just into Lamb Crescent with its very own private lawned rear garden. The accommodation is VERY GENEROUS and WELL PRESENTED throughout and includes TWO LARGE DOUBLE BEDROOMS. EPC TBA

Price: £104,950

UPPER GORNAL , Kent Street

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Ideal buy-to-let investment? Spacious, uPVC double glazed, First Floor flat in established district convenient for so many amenities. Accommodation includes; reception hall, 17'9" living/dining room (possibilities of sub division?), Well equipped kitchen, TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS ,upgraded bathroom. Allocated garden (specific parking space), brick store. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £83,000

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This stunningly presented modern detached property in Kinloch Drive, Earls Keep, Dudley, has been much extended and improved.

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An ideal family home, 18 Chiltern Close, Halesowen, is a terraced property with three good-sized bedrooms, a modern dining kitchen and a good-sized lounge.

Having double glazing and central heating, it is for sale through Trinity Property at £202,000 with no chain.

In more detail the entrance hallway has a door leading to an inner hallway. The lounge has a feature fireplace and a door leading to the kitchen/diner. This is an open plan room with a range of wall and base units, a single mixer tap with drainer and a double glazed sliding door to the rear garden.

For further information contact Trinity Property on 01384 213395 or visit www.trinityproperty.net

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MOTORING

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO THE BEST CARS ON THE MARKET

A giant leap forward for SsangYong's Rexton

South Korean 4x4 specialists SsangYong have relatively modest aspirations for sales of its all-new Rexton model in the UK, *writes John Griffiths.*

It may be realistic but in many ways it's a pity as the budget brand's latest offering is a giant leap forward on the previous Rexton, very capable and exuding a much more upmarket feel. It's a full-size SUV packed with technology and serious off-road ability, plus it's a seven-seater and a towing limit of 3,500kgs – enough for a large horsebox with two equines on board or some of the biggest caravans.

Yet with prices starting at £27,500, it undercuts some of the current crop of SUV-styled cars with two wheel drive only, and space for only five passengers and a lot less luggage. Plus the Rexton has a five year, unlimited mileage warranty behind it.

The all-new SsangYong Rexton at Weston Park on the Staffordshire border this week

Inspired

SsangYong has been making 4x4s for more than 60 years, so it's no surprise that it has that aspect well sorted. But until recently – and the advent of the smaller but widely acclaimed Tivoli – it has had the image of being somewhat utilitarian in its approach.

Inspired by that car's success in Europe, the new Rexton follows its example with a stylish, sculpted new body, yet one which retains a suitability muscular appearamce. Inside the story continues, with a modern Tivoli-esque panel and centre console, big, comfortable seats and a range of higher quality, softer materials. It's packed with technology, too.

The first and second row of seats have generous levels of head and leg room for adults, and even the fold-down pair of seats in the rear shouldn't be ruled out as full-size accommodation. The layout means luggage room is exceptional: from 820 to 1,977 litres on five-seater versions and from 649 to 1,808 litres in the seven-seater (with rear seats folded flat).

In base level (EX) models the centre console is dominated by an eight-inch touch screen controlling the audio system, connectivity, the reversing camera view and the ability to link to your Apple and smartphone apps.

ELX and Ultimate models get a 9.2 inch HD screen which adds satnav and the 3D all-round monitoring system, with cameras which help you slip into tight parking places and, as was demonstrated on an off-road test, to avoid hazards like tree stumps and rocks.

The body, as well as being larger than its predecessor, is also considerably stronger thanks to the use of high-strength steels, creating both a safer and better handling car. The safety systems include ABS, electronic stability programme, nine airbags, autonomous emergency braking, forward collision warning, lane departure warning, traffic sign recognition, blind spot detection and rear crossing traffic alert.

The driver's instruments include a colour 'supervision' panel allowing you to see such information as current speed limit, satnav prompts, trip information and a range of safety system alerts. Other standard features include electric windows, tailgate, cruise control, a heated leather steering wheel, windscreen wiper defroster, electric folding and heated mirrors and air conditioning.

The £37,500 flagship 'Ultimate' model adds luxuries such as leather upholstery, heated seats front and rear, ventilated and electrically adjustable front seats, LED foglights and cornering lights to name but a few highlights.

The heart of the new Rexton is SsangYong's own 2.2 litre diesel engine, mated to a six-speed manual gearbox or a smooth seven-speed Mercedes auto. It has 181Ps of power and a hefty 420Nm of torque from just 1,400rpm which give it a 0 to 62mph sprint time of just under 12 seconds.

Remarkable

It actually feels livelier than that, particularly in the mid-ranges, but the most remarkable thing about it (and the car as a whole) is its particularly low noise levels. In fact the Rexton has braggig rights over many of its rivals when it comes to what engineers call NVH (noise vibration and harshness) for its refined driving experience which complements the new, upgraded interior. It feels relaxed and comfortable, with a surprising smooth ride considering its a car designed to take the rough with the smooth.

A simple rotary dial allows you to choose 'two high' for driving the rear wheels through the standard gear ratios to 'four high' for slippery conditions and 'four low' for four wheel drive and low ratios when the going really gets tough. With the addition of hill descent control the Rexton's off-road performance is impressive. Up and down steep, wet grassy slopes and tackling a series of inclines in the deep mud of an old quarry were taken in its stride during testing.

The official average fuel consumption figures are 34 to 36mpg, depending on model and transmission choice, with CO2 figures of between 204 and 218g/km.

Appearances are subjective, of course, but SsangYong has created a car for all reasons: stylish family transport with serious off-road and towing ability that few in this price range can emulate.

It retains all of its predecessors' utility and workmanlike competence, but adds a lot more stylng, luxury and refinement to tempt European – and particularly UK – car buyers.

Range of offers from Renault

New Scenic costs from £219 a month

Renault has a range of offers for the final quarter of 2017 including a three-year 0 per cent APR Selections PCP finance package available on Clio, new Captur, Kadjar, Mégane, Mégane Sport Tourer, all-new Scénic, all-new Grand Scénic and All-New Koleos. These offers are available until December 31.

The Clio can be driven away from only £129 per month on the three-year 0 per cent APR PCP Selections package. Buyers in the market for a more family-sized vehicle can look at the Kadjar crossover available from £199 per month on the same three-year 0 per cent APR PCP Selections offer. Alternatively, the new Scenic can be purchased from just £219 per month using the three-year 0 per cent APR PCP Selections scheme.

Meanwhile, drivers looking for a multiple-award winning, affordable electric vehicle have the Renault ZOE Z.E. 40 with a number of offers available. On top of a free 7kW Wall-Box home charger, the ZOE Dynamique Z.E. 40, priced from £18,170 (excluding battery hire, including PiCG), is available with a four-year 4.9 per cent APR representative Selections PCP package. The ZOE – now with a 250 mile (NEDC) range – can be purchased with a deposit of £2,499 and monthly payments of £249 (including monthly battery hire and PiCG)1.

For those wishing to buy a ZOE without the monthly battery rental then there is also an offer available on the 'full purchase' ZOE-i. The ZOE-i Dynamique R90 Z.E. 40 is available with a deposit of £4,499 and payments of £249 per month (including PiCG), based on a four-year 4.9 per cent APR Selections PCP offer.

For further details on the offers, including full terms and conditions, and Renault's extensive model range, visit www.renault.co.uk/offers

New MINI 1499 GT is latest special edition to UK line-up

The latest special edition to join the MINI UK line-up celebrates the brand's rich heritage with a nod to one of the best known sporty classic Minis of all time, the 1275 GT.

Available to order now, the 1499 GT recalls the entertaining drive, distinctive styling and low running costs of the 1969 original, which was one of the most affordable performance cars of its day.

The 1275 GT badging reflected the increased engine capacity over the standard 998cc Mini. The all-new MINI 1499 GT treads a similar path for 2017. With 102 hp on tap and 0-60mph in 10.1 seconds courtesy of its lively Twin Power Turbo three-cylinder engine, the 1499 GT is perfect for drivers seeking an entertaining drive and unique vehicle.

The 1499 GT will be built in a limited production run of just 1,499 cars between November 2017 and February 2018, and is sure to be in high demand.

For the launch of the 1499 GT, MINI Financial Services has launched an enticing new finance offer. MINI Ready Fuel Go* offers one year's inclusive insurance (subject to terms**) with a £299 customer deposit and £299 monthly payment. On the road pricing starts at £16,990.

There will be a choice of two colours, Pepper White or Midnight Black. In Midnight Black, the car gets distinctive gold 1499 GT side stripes. Pepper White models feature the same distinctive graphics, but in black.

Additional exterior features include the MINI John Cooper Works Sport Pack, featuring 17" Track Spoke alloy wheels in Black, dark tinted windows and white indicator lenses. The styling pack includes distinctive John Cooper Works front and rear bumpers, side skirts, a split level spoiler and John Cooper Works door entry plates.

Interior features include John Cooper Works Sports seats in Dinamica and leather and JCW badges, a JCW steering wheel in perforated leather with Chilli Red stitching and multi-function controls, cruise control, a Visual Boost radio with MINI Connected smartphone compatibility and Piano Black interior trim, along with Carbon Black interior details and an Anthracite headlining.

A sports suspension completes the MINI 1499 GT package, which also includes all of the standard equipment found on the MINI One Hatch. This includes features such as independent rear suspension, a six-speed manual gearbox with sports-car inspired rev matching technology, air conditioning and all-round disc brakes.

Skoda's Citigo is a strong contender

By Jack Evans

The Skoda Citigo is about as no-frills a car as you can get today. It's designed for urban drivers who need a practical but compact way of getting around, as well as for those who don't want to pay the earth in running costs. The original car did this to a tee and it was updated for 2017.

What does that mean? Well, the exterior – which was never bad looking in the first place – was treated to a reshaped front grille and modified bumper as well as daytime running lights. There's also a jazzy new colour – Kiwi Green – which stands out against the plethora of grey and black hues currently on the road today.

Inside, you now get a redesigned instrument cluster while a new infotainment system gives clearer control over the DAB digital radio and media options. There's even a multifunction steering wheel available – though this is an optional extra.

The previous-generation Citigo was a good-looking little car and thankfully Skoda has only improved the package. The daytime running lights give it a little more presence on the road, while redesigned 15-inch alloy wheels fill the Citigo's arches nicely. The all-new Kiwi Green colour looks great on the car too.

The Citigo's interior has a quality to it that you'd expect from cars double its price. Everything feels exceptionally well put together, and though there are some harder plastics to be found, you need to remember that they're in a car which can be bought for a shade under £9,000.

It's impressive, just as it was in the original, while the variety of Skoda 'Simply Clever' features – an umbrella under the front passenger seat and a fold-out bag hook on the handle of the glove compartment, for instance – only add to the interior's quality.

There's 215 litres of seats-up boot space

Given that the Citigo measures just 3,597mm then you wouldn't expect to find much in the way of practicality. The reality couldn't be further from the truth. In five-door layout, there's 251 litres of seats-up boot space, rising to 959 litres with them folded down. It has a split floor too, giving a far more flexible storage solution.

Front seat passengers get plenty of leg and headroom, while those in the back are – surprisingly – equally well catered for. Of course, taller passengers may struggle in terms of headroom, but occupants of average height will be more than comfortable.

In the modern motoring age of driving assists and autonomous steering, the Citigo offers a driving experience that is nothing short of refreshing. There haven't been any mechanical changes made to this car over the previous model, which means that it drives just as well as it did.

The daytime running lights give it a little more presence on the road, while redesigned 15-inch alloy wheels fill the Citigo's arches nicely

The steering is light but communicative, while the five-speed manual gearbox has a decent action.

The engine needs to be worked hard at times – especially on steep gradients – but most of the time it's settled and refined – something you wouldn't expect from a three-cylinder.

It's a basic driving experience, that's for sure, but that doesn't stop it from being an enjoyable one. And if you're after a car that is happier doing longer miles, then the more powerful engine is the one to go for.

If you want a Citigo with all the bells and whistles then that's what you can get in the £11,325 Monte Carlo-edition car. In truth though, we'd recommend going for a more base-spec Citigo, as it lies closer to the car's no-frills mentality than the more equipment-laden models.

The SE model is the pick of the bunch in our eyes, offering air conditioning, rear folding seats and an infotainment system with Bluetooth connectivity and six speakers for £9,635 for the 59bhp, three-door model. It also remains a very good car for first-time drivers thanks to its Group 2 insurance rating.

The Citigo is ideal for drivers who want a car that isn't festooned with technology, and one which doesn't cost all that much to run. As mentioned earlier, it's also a great choice for just-passed motorists who are looking to keep insurance premiums to a minimum.

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VAUXHALL

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, October 19, 2017

Award-winning van range expanded

Vauxhall has expanded its popular Corsavan range with the addition of a new top-of-the-range Limited Edition NAV model. Available to order now priced at £15,515 excluding VAT, the new variant offers some of the latest technology and stylish exterior design features.

The new Corsavan Limited Edition NAV model features unique exterior graphics, as well as black wing mirrors, 16-inch Black Alloy Wheels and a Carbon Flash grille bar. The stylish new black accents have been designed to complement the Corsavan's full range of exterior colours (excluding Royal Blue and Metallic Black).

The Tourer Elite is the perfect business shuttle

The new variant offers some of the latest technology

The new Corsavan Limited Edition NAV model features unique exterior graphics

Impressive

The new model also marks the introduction of the Persian Blue exterior colour, which is offered exclusively on the Limited Edition NAV.

As well as a new look exterior, the new model trim will add Navi 4.0 IntelliLink connectivity to an already impressive list of standard technology.

The updated system has a seven-inch colour touchscreen for easy navigation, with features including RDS with Traffic Programme, Eco Routing, DAB digital radio, and sat nav with European coverage.

The unit's smartphone integration is compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and enables USB connection, Bluetooth connectivity and A2DP audio streaming.

"This stylish new Corsavan will appeal to operators who want a small car-derived van that stands out from the crowd," said Steve Bryant, Vauxhall's head of commercial vehicle brand.

"It's exceptionally well-equipped for its size, with features including Navi 4.0 IntelliLink connectivity with a seven-inch touchscreen."

Also recently announced are two new up-level Vauxhall Vivaro variants: the Tourer Elite and Combi Plus. Aimed at the business shuttle market, the Tourer Elite model will be available with a 1.6-litre CDTi BiTurbo engine with 125PS or 145PS, in either L1 or L2 body. And designed for customers after a more generously specified combi, the Combi Plus is more car-like, and less van-like than the standard Vivaro Combi.

With order books opening soon, both models will be built at Vauxhall's manufacturing plant in Luton, Bedfordshire.

"These new top-of-the-range Vivaros offer our customers even more comfort and flexibility," said Steve Bryant, Vauxhall's head of Commercial Vehicle Brand. The Tourer Elite is the perfect business shuttle and the Combi Plus is a more generously specified version of our popular Combi.

"Both models expand our portfolio and take us into new areas of the market."

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VAUXHALL

Probably best car Vauxhall makes

By Ian Donaldson

Vauxhall can't have heard about the demise of diesel; the new range topping Insignia Country Tourer comes with nothing else.

In fact, there isn't even a choice of engine until a second one arrives in a few weeks. And that's a diesel too.

Of course, Vauxhall knows diesels are going to be around for years and the overhyped stories that diesel is in its death throws are simply nonsense.

Which is just as well if you enjoy your driving, for the newcomer is probably the best car Vauxhall currently makes.

Ability

For a £1,355 premium over the normal Sport Tourer you gain four-wheel drive in the most expensive version, while all of them have a gently raised ride height (+20mm) and the macho black plastic cladding and silver skid plates that these days signifies a car with the ability to handle a slippery forest track.

The result is a big car, more than five metres long, that socks it to the likes of Audi's Allroad and the VW Passat Alltrack but for thousands less, starting the three car range at £25,635.

All of them share a 168bhp 2.0 litre turbo diesel engine and the ability to touch 135mph and hit 62mph in around nine seconds while managing better than 43mpg in the official test. A 210 horsepower diesel arrives shortly and automatic gears are already an option in a Country Tourer in front-drive form. Order the 4x4 (£27,235) and you'll have a car that is mostly front wheel drive most of the time but can switch power to the back wheels in an instant when slip is detected.

Beneath the new body cladding sits a car with enough space in the rear seat to act a stand-in limo and a boot that varies from generous (560 litres) with the seat back upright to vast (1,665 litres) with it folded down.

Lack of room will never be a problem here. Nor will the fittings and fixtures that come with a car Vauxhall perches at the pinnacle of the Insignia range.

As befits the poshest model there are a host of standard features, from a tailgate that opens with a well aimed kicking motion under the rear bumper to roof rails that can cope with loads up to 100kg.

You and your passengers should never feel a wintry chill in this car, with heated front seats as standard and outer rear seats as an option along with the option of a heated steering wheel for the driver and a heated windscreen to quickly banish early morning frost.

Standard kit also includes a fine satellite navigation, cruise control, leather faced seats, 19ins alloy wheels, panoramic camera and Vauxhall's OnStar system that gives you a wi-fi hotspot in the car and automatic crash response if the worst happens.

But this version of the Insignia goes well beyond its specification and turns into an enjoyable drive as soon as you head off down the road, a potent and easy-going diesel engine mating with a precise manual gearchange to provide a car with genuine punch.

On a properly surfaced road, even in pouring rain, you're unlikely ever to trigger the 4x4 system into instant action. But come a winter chill or a muddy lane in deepest February and you might be very glad that your Country Tourer will take care of things for you.

Standard kit includes a fine satellite navigation system

This car has plenty of space for passengers in the rear

This version of the Insignia goes well beyond its specification and turns into an enjoyable ride

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VAUXHALL

A new model of car access with 'Care by Volvo' service

An XC40 will be as hassle-free as using your mobile phone

By James Parker

Volvo Cars is inventing a new model of car access with the launch of the new Volvo XC40 and the new 'Care by Volvo' subscription service. This will make having a car as transparent, easy and hassle free as having a phone: a national, ready-negotiated monthly fee, combined with getting a new car every 24 months.

After ordering online, Care by Volvo customers will be able to drive away in a new Volvo without having to worry about the traditional extras such as deposits, insurances, taxes, service fees and geographical or customer age-related differences.

Furthermore, Care by Volvo will, depending on regional availability, offer a range of digital concierge services, such as fuelling, cleaning, service pick-up and e-commerce delivery to the car.

XC40 drivers will also be the first Volvo customers who can share their car with friends and family with a new digital key technology. This sharing feature comes as standard for Care by Volvo customers.*

Håkan Samuelsson, president and chief executive of Volvo Cars, said: "With Care by Volvo, we introduce a new car access for the modern age. In a time where consumers are used to transparent flat fees for all sorts of services, the traditional process of buying and owning a car can be perceived as rather complicated. Care by Volvo changes all of that."

Care by Volvo is car access for the modern age

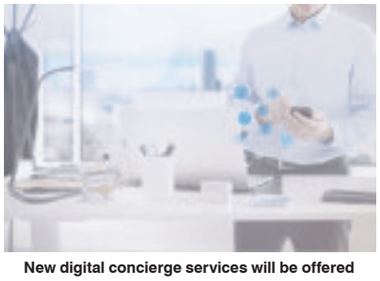
The new XC40 will be the first model on which Care by Volvo is offered. Other Volvo models will be included over time, as will new digital concierge services.

Care by Volvo is a concept that will develop and expand over time. The central focus is on offering customers convenient access to the sense of freedom a car is meant to deliver.

"Our aim with Care by Volvo is to provide our customers with a transparent, premium car user experience. With a fixed monthly payment, Volvo Cars provides a truly customer-focused alternative to the traditional purchase or leasing. Time is a luxury for our customers, and with this service we are able to free up time in their daily lives. This is simply making life easier for our customers," said Thomas Andersson, vice president Care by Volvo at Volvo Cars.

Earlier this month, Volvo announced the acquisition of the technology platform and key staff of Luxe, a US-based premium valet and concierge service company. The acquisition is another example of Volvo's ongoing development in the area of digital consumer experiences.

Care by Volvo is first available for buyers of the new Volvo XC40 in the following markets: Sweden, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Italy, Norway, Poland and the United States. Other markets will follow at a later stage.



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2017 **V40 D3 R-Design,** Rear Park Assist, Bursting Blue	£27,145	£7,146	£19,999
2017 **V40 T2 R-Design Pro,** Winter Pack, Bursting Blue	£26,520	£7,021	£19,499
2017 **V40 T2 Momentum,** Osmium Grey	£21,245	£6,246	£14,999
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Kia enters the fastest-growing market sector with Stonic SUV

Stonic is based on the latest Rio supermini

Kia has entered Europe's fastest-growing market sector, small (B-segment) SUVs, with Stonic, a sporty and smart new model priced from £16,295.

The B-SUV market in Europe is expected to double to more than two million a year by 2020, based on 2016 figures. Kia expects to sell 70,000 versions of Stonic in Europe in 2018, rising steadily to 100,000 a year. The UK will account for between 8,000 and 10,000 sales a year.

Stonic is based on the latest Rio supermini and is powered by high-efficiency, high-technology petrol and diesel powertrains from Rio and the cee'd family.

In the UK there is a five-model line-up based on grade 2 and First Edition trim levels. All versions offer an extensive package of connectivity features, including links to Android Auto and Apple CarPlay via pre-downloaded smartphone apps, while advanced electronic driver assistance systems such as autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning and automatic switching between high and low headlight beams are available.

Stonic is Kia's first small SUV, and it brings the brand's unique, multi-award-winning styling to the B-SUV class. Buyers are moving into B-SUVs from superminis, small MPVs and three-door compact hatchbacks. Stonic is slightly longer than Rio. It is also 70mm taller and rides 42mm higher from the ground to give it a clear SUV stance.

Key signature design elements such as the 'tiger-nose' main front grille ensure that Stonic is instantly recognisable as a member of the modern Kia family.

The First Edition version stands out even more thanks to its two-tone paintwork. The roof, wing mirror casings

Three modern and efficient engines are available

and rear spoiler are picked out in either black, lime green, red or orange, depending on the choice of main body colour, and there are colour accents in the interior on the seats and around the lower centre console and display screen areas.

The horizontal theme evident in the exterior styling is repeated in the cabin, emphasising width and space while separating the upper information and lower control areas.

The number of buttons and switches has been kept to a minimum to give a neater look and greater functionality. The First Edition follows the Rio in offering USB ports front and rear so that mobile devices can be charged from any seat.

All versions are generously equipped, with an extensive range of active safety features and up-to-the-minute connectivity in First Edition versions.

Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and Vehicle Stability Management (VSM) are standard. All versions also have Hill-start Assist to prevent the car from rolling backwards when setting off on steep inclines.

Autonomous Emergency Braking and Lane Departure Warning are standard in the First Edition and optional on grade 2 as part of an Advanced Driving Assistance Pack (ADAP). The Lane Departure Warning System is linked to Driver Attention Warning, which can alert a drowsy or distracted driver that it is time to take a break, and High Beam Assist, which automatically switches the car between dipped and full beam according to the traffic around it and the local street lighting.

The First Edition also has Blind Spot Detection with Rear Cross Traffic Alert, to prevent the car from being driven into the path of a vehicle approaching from an angle out of the driver's eye-line.

Three modern and efficient engines are available in Stonic, headed by Kia's 1.0-litre T-GDi unit delivering 118bhp. It lines up alongside a 1.4-litre multi-point injection naturally aspirated 98bhp petrol engine and the 108bhp 1.6-litre CRDi turbodiesel from the cee'd range.

ISG, Kia's engine stop/start system to ensure no fuel is wasted and no emissions are pumped into the air when the car is stationary, is standard. All versions are paired with a six-speed manual transmission and are front-wheel drive.

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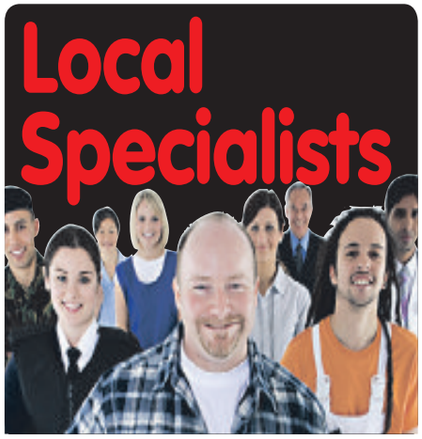

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4 Pets & Animals

Equestrian Corner

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Guns & Dogs

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Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
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2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
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5 Business & Farming

business directory

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6 Property

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NOTICE TO READERS
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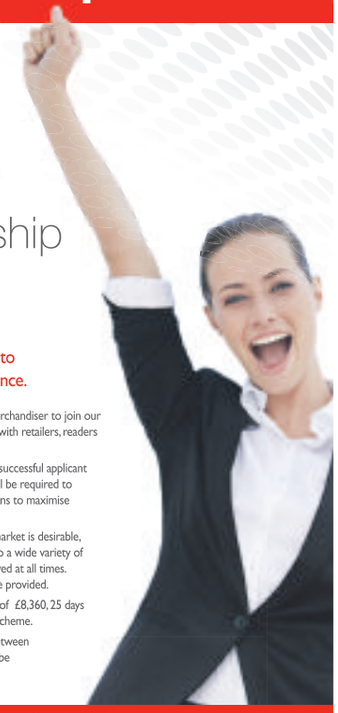

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Working within a busy customer focused environment, the successful applicant will work as part of a team, in designated territories, you will be required to ensure that all our titles are available, in key strategic positions to maximise response and exposure.

Previous sales or merchandising experience in the FMCG market is desirable, but not essential. The ability to react quickly and positively to a wide variety of situations is required. A professional attitude must be displayed at all times. You must have a full current driving licence, transport will be provided.

In return we offer full training and support, an annual salary of £8,360, 25 days holiday per year and enrolment into the company pension scheme.

The position is 20 hours per week worked across 5 days between Monday-Saturday, weekends and Bank Holiday working will be required on a rota basis.

if you would like to be considered for this role please send your cv and covering letter to:
HR Department Midland News Association, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES
or by e-mail to: **hr@mnamedia.co.uk** **Closing date: Friday 27th October, 2017.**

MNA Media

SENIOR JOURNALISTS

The Midland News Association, publishers of the Shropshire Star and Express & Star, is looking for senior journalists to join its team based in Shropshire.

This is the ideal role for an ambitious, dedicated and enthusiastic writer with a proven track-record of digging out the best off-diary news stories, features and analysis. You should be comfortable writing for a range of publications including newspapers and magazines.

We are looking for journalists able to come up with ideas and deliver compelling content on a consistent basis.

You must be an NCTJ-trained journalist, able to deliver accurate, entertaining copy to meet strict deadlines. You must have a full, clean driving licence. Some experience of working in a newsdesk role would be an advantage.

You will benefit from a competitive salary, 25 days annual holiday and the chance to develop your career at Britain's largest independent regional news company.

Apply by e-mail to Shropshire Star editor Martin Wright at editorial.support@shropshirestar.co.uk by 5pm on Friday, October 27.

Postal applications to Martin Wright, Editor, Shropshire Star, Ketley, Telford TF1 5HU by Monday, October 30.

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Star Public Relations is looking to recruit an ambitious and dynamic PR Executive who is willing to get stuck in and help deliver for our growing portfolio of clients, as well as support the agency as we target new business opportunities.

Under the guidance of the agency director, the successful candidate will be required to plan and manage client work; attend meetings with clients; research and write press releases, features and other content; liaise with media; oversee social media accounts; help organise and manage events; monitor for media coverage and prepare coverage reports for clients; and much more...

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The successful candidate must have:

- At least two years of agency or in-house experience
- Solid written and verbal communication skills
- The ability to take instructions, plan workload and undertake tasks with little fuss
- An ability to think creatively and produce compelling content
- Confidence and credibility when pitching to media and clients, both current and prospective
- Enthusiasm and a willingness to learn
- Good knowledge of various social media platforms

Additional benefits

The successful candidate will benefit from flexible start and finish times, as well as the opportunity to work from home on occasion. Days off in lieu are also provided should weekend work be required. The successful candidate will also be provided with the opportunity to enhance their PR skills through training provided by the Chartered Institute for Public Relations (CIPR).

- Full-time PR Executive
- Salary - £22k-£25k per annum (depending on experience)
- Location - Telford (primary) and Wolverhampton

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Or apply by email to: hr@mnamedia.co.uk.

Deadline for submission is Thursday 26th October 2017

8 Motoring

Cars Over £1500

FORD FIESTA 1.0 ECO BOOST
21,654 miles, excellent condition, fsh, £0 tax, blue, abs, electric windows, air con, alarm, MoT, central locking, 1 owner, pas, alloys, stereo, CD, spots.
£7,500 ono.
07891 944781.

FORD FIESTA 1.4
Petrol. Five door. 2010, (later shape), 66,800 miles, service history. One previous owner. Magenta metallic, long MoT. Looks and drives really well.
£3,975 ono.
01902 674550.

FORD FIESTA ZETEC
2010, 31,500 miles, Metallic Silver, 1.25cc, MoT, 4 new tyres, FSH, Immaculate condition. Garaged. Lady owner. Air con. Electric windows/Mirrors
£3,995 ono
07984 626831.

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2007, TDi, 64,000 miles, blue, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, fsh, alarm, long MoT. Superb condition.
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01902 897680.

BARGAIN
FORD KA
13 reg
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lady owner,
new baby force sale,
£2,795.
07404 322690.

MUST BE SEEN
HONDA ACCORD EXECUTIVE
05 reg., one owner, MoT till end March, 90,500 miles, silver, sunroof, Sat Nav, electric heated front seats, good condition.
£1,900
01902 850608.

MUST BE SEEN
HYUNDAI I 10
2009, 25, 655 miles, silver, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, fsh, alarm, long MoT, Alloy wheels.
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KIA SORENTO XS
76,000 miles, 2003,
one owner from new,
many extras, no tow bar, silver, long MoT,
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MERCEDES ESTATE CAR
E270 Elegance, 2004, automatic, diesel, 1398mls, full MOT and history, beautiful condition.
£2,495 ono
01562 730897
or
07563 795191.

1ST TO SEE WILL BUY
NISSAN NAVARA
2013, 31 plate, manual, 64,000 miles, Sat Nav, leather, towbar, quality canopy, fsh, grey.
£11,500.
Telephone 07944 818083 or 01584 872986.

DIESEL
NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5 DIESEL
09 plate,
72,000 miles,
FSH,
2 owners from new.
£5,500 ono.
07972 508526.

BARGAIN
PEUGEOT 107
2011 reg, petrol,
8 months MoT, £20 tax,
Must be seen.
Excellent condition.
£1,695.
07377 981431.

RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE
2012, 38,000 miles, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, fsh, long MoT, cruise control, Navigation System,half leather
£3,499 ono.
07879 403302.

VAUXHALL INSIGNIA EXCL
128 CDTi, 2.0, silver, 2011,
long MoT.
First to see will buy.
£3,000 ono.
07913 981460.

MUST BE SEEN
VOLVO 855 GLT AUTO
One owner from new
1995
Very low mileage.
£1,000.
01902 894100.

VW GOLF 1.6 2014, diesel 14,300 Miles, red, 5 door, one lady owner. Exceptional condition.£11,400 0772095031

1ST TO SEE WILL BUY
VW GOLF 2.0 TDi SPORT
2006 reg.
5 door hatch back.
Black.
Good condition.
130,000 miles.
New cam belt.
MoT'd.
£2,195 ono.
07787 410300.

VW POLO
1.2 S, 2006, 57000 miles, one owner, full service History, Brilliant Condition, 2 Keys, Alloys, Air con.
£2,495 ono
07977 939497.

Cars Under £1500

ALFA ROMEO 147
3-dr, leather interior, new MoT, new tyres,
Genuine reason for sale.
£650.
01562 911887

DAEWOO MATIZ SE PLUS
955cc, 03 reg., only 45,000 miles, with service history, two former keepers, long MoT, stunning condition.
Only £645.
07963 464780

IDEAL FIRST CAR
DAWOO MATIZ SE PLUS
54 reg, 1000cc, full MoT,
5-dr, blue,
71,000 miles from new,
£525.
07874 870104.

1ST TO SEE WILL BUY
FIAT PUNTO 2006 ACTIVE SPORT 8V
12 months MoT.
1200 cc.
43,000 miles.
Excellent condition.
£1,195 ono.
07486 468359 or 07986 873661.

GOOD RUNNER
FORD FOCUS ESTATE DIESEL
2000 reg.
182,000 miles.
8 months MoT.
£300 ono.
0744 5442832.

HONDA ACCORD SE i-VTEC 2.0 PETROL
4-dr saloon,
2006 (56),
121k miles,
long MoT, silver,
alloys, sunroof, EW, EM.
Good condition.
£1,495 ovno
07792 680247.

LOW MILEAGE
NISSAN ALMERA
T reg.,
80,000 miles,
MoT March 2018,
great runner,
good condition inside and out,
Lady owner,
lots of service history.
£375 ono
07487 797639.

NISSAN X-TRAIL
2003, 104,600 miles, metallic green, abs, air con, fsh, alarm, MoT, central locking, sunroof, DAB / Bluetooth radio, towbar, excellent condition.
£1,850.
01384 298598.

BARGAIN
VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 ELEGANCE
2003, Silver colour, 3Dr hatch, MoT 4 months, mileage 66,000,
good condition.
£550 o.n.o.
Wolverhampton
07791 703843

EXCELLENT CONDITION
VW JETTA 1.4, TSi SE
Petrol, 07 reg,
Very good condition,
Silver, 12 months MoT.
Service history
£2,950 ono.
01384 891879.

Classic Cars

FORD ESCORT
Escort 1300e.
This car has been restored over the past 3 years it is registered in my name and with MoT.
£4,400
0044 1623272106

WANTED, CLASSIC Car. Private cash buyer. Any condition, anything considered.
01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

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OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

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TOP PRICES PAID FOR ALL SCRAP CARS, VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS
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1000's of parts available at all times
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Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
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9 Local Information

Public Notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
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(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

GWENNETH ELIZA BYTHEWAY (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of Netherton Green Nursing Home Bowling Green Road Netherton Dudley, who died on 17/08/2017, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 29/12/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
WALDRONS SOLICITORS
813 High Street Kingswinford DY6 8AD
T513786

10 Personals

Personal

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL LONELY FEMALES
Aged 55-67.
So I am a single male, easy going with GSOH, seeks a lovely lady with lots of fun, aged 55-68.
What do you want to find out of life in the future?
Happy New Year.
Don't be alone.
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Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

62 YEAR OLD MALE
Seeks female for companionship, aged or nationality unimportant.
Photo appreciated and returned.
Box Number P20987,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton,
WV1 1ES.

ATTRACTIVE MALE 57
No ties, own house and car, kind and caring, enjoys weekends away, holidays abroad, nice restaurants, nights out and in, would like to meet attractive female similar interests hopefully leading to long term relationship.
Box Number P20986 ,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

EAGLES FEMALE FAN OF ANY AGE
Welcome to accompany Gent to Talon at The Grand Theatre, on October 31.
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Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

LADY, 82
Young outlook, often lonely, seeks elderly gentleman to meet on a friendly, regular basis, mid day or afternoon for tea/coffee in town,
Wolverhampton, Cannock or Tettenhall.
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MAN, YOUNGISH 60
Very genuine, WLTM male company for relationship.
Photo if possible (Returned)
Box Number P20985 ,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

ATTRACTIVE lonely Female seeking broadminded males within a 20 mile radius. 01902 489 181.

VIP treatment for former Darlo heroes

FORMER Darlaston players are being given the VIP treatment as the club embarks on the Birmingham County Vase this weekend.

Darlaston Town (1874) remain the only club to have won the competition in consecutive years, 1990/91 and 1991/92. They entertain Coventry Alliance side AEI Rugby on Saturday. Players and officials from that 90s era are invited back as VIP guests, with free admission, complimentary programme, pre-match, half-time and post-match hospitality.

Among those in attendance will be Mark Bates, Mick Rawlings, Paul Brown, Phil Wood, Paul Rideout and Ian Hughes. Also likely to be there is former Walsall and Aston Villa player and manager of the 1991/92 Darlaston cup winning side Jimmy McMorran.

The club is appealing to all former players and officials who played a significant role in the history of the club to attend and see the new-look team and venue at the Paycare Ground, Bentley Leisure Pavilion. Get in touch with chairman Neil Chambers on 07976 752698.

All Wyton night as Cradley talk of Town

BOSS Andy Wyton declared Cradley Town have been 'dormant' for too long, but they are now on the rise as they set about a five-year-plan to improve the club.

Wyton is spearheading the project that bosses have put together to improve facilities and promoting youth football.

Cradley, formed in 1948, currently lie third in the West Midlands Premier. And Wyton, a former player at the club, said: "Cradley have been dormant for too many years but we want to make sure they come out of it."

Their long-term project was drawn up at the end of last season, when Wyton became Town's sole manager after former joint-boss Mark Jones mutually parted ways with the club.

Cradley Town are based at The Beeches stadium, located in a housing estate on Beeches View Avenue in Cradley. Plans are in the pipeline to develop a number of junior sides and this has been boosted by the development of a miniature pitch.

Look Hughes back for darts Grand Slam

BLACK Country thrower Jamie Hughes is will be back on home soil next month after qualifying for the Grand Slam of Darts.

Wolverhampton's Civic Hall will host the tournament from November 11-19, with world No.1 Michael van Gerwen, legend Phil Taylor and double world champions Adrian Lewis and Gary Anderson among the biggest names lining up.

And joining the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) heavyweights at the £450,000 event are eight players from the British Darts Organisation, including Tipton thrower Hughes.

Nicknamed Yozza, Hughes competes in a shirt of the Black Country flag and reached the second round on his debut last year. The 31-year-old has reached the semi-finals of the last two BDO World Championships, losing to the eventual winners – Scott Waites and Glen Durrant – on each occasion.

New sponsors have come on board to support the next Grand Slam, with Austrian-based betting company Bwin replacing Thai brewers Singha Beer.

Imogen Harley, Lynsey Kelly, Liz Lister and Holly Badderley

Jaiden Tutt, Adrain Dillon, Alfie Talbot and Matthew Whiddon

Athletes run up golden anniversary celebrations

SPORTING FEATURE

By Ian Harvey

HUNDREDS of athletes turned out to a glitzy birthday dinner celebrating 50 years of Wolverhampton & Bilston Athletics Club.

Awards were handed out to this year's star performers as a toast was raised to the club's long running success.

Club president Mary Harding said it was great to see athletes young and old come together to celebrate the anniversary. Olympic champion Denise Lewis MBE had been invited but did not attend.

The Aldersley Road-based club has churned out international athletes over the years, with some going on to reach the top tier of athletics.

Mary said: "Tonight 480 people have come together from the old boys of 50 years ago with the athletes of today. There is a great combination of talent in this room tonight."

Atmosphere

Club athletes, friends and family packed into WV1 Suite at Molineux Stadium for the birthday dinner. Tables were lined out across the room, where people took their seats to listen to awards being handed out.

A party atmosphere filled the room as names were read out for athletes to walk up to the stage and collect their awards. Around 50 awards were presented to athletes aged under 13 up to senior levels in track and field.

Mary added: "The event was absolutely brilliant. Denise (Lewis) didn't come. It was a bit disappointing. She had the opportunity and we did expect her. It was a lovely event, all people came together to share their stories."

On the eve of the celebrations, the club staged the David Coleman Mile Races, named in honour of the popular former broadcaster who was president of the club during its heyday. The history of the club can be traced back to before the First World War in 1914, with a club based at Molineux with a track around the football pitch.

A decade later, Wolverhampton Athletics Club was formed and in 1943 they merged with Penn Harriers to form Wolverhampton Harriers. After using various grounds in Compton, at Tettenhall College and at Marsh Lane the club moved to Aldersley Stadium in 1956.

The municipal sports stadium was also home to Wolverhampton Wheelers Cycling Club. In 1967 Bilston was incorporated into Wolverhampton in a local government reorganisation and the two local clubs, Wolverhampton Harriers and Bilston Town Athletic Club, merged.

The club went on to dominate track and field, winning the National League Division One for men from 1975 to 1982, the Men's National Cup final in 1976, 1977, 1979 and 1980. It also represented Britain in the European Clubs Cup from 1976-83 with the best finishing position of third.

In 1960 Peter Radford broke the world 200m record in 20.5s in an international held at Aldersley.

The club suffered some decline in the 1980s, but is now enjoying a resurgence. Male athletes compete in the Midland's Men's League and the females in the Midland Women's League and the National League.

With 40 coaches, all England Athletics qualified, there is a comprehensive programme for all youngsters including running, throwing, jumping, hurdling and walking. Email Tracy Cresswell at Tracy@wolvesandbilstonac.co.uk for further membership details.

Mary Harding with Hugh Porter and the Roger Walter Trophy as guests celebrate the 50th anniversary

"It was a lovely event, all people came together to share their stories."

Final whistle

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Sport

Golden days! Athletics club on track to celebrate 50th

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Glassboys' cup hopes shattered

Stourbridge 0 Macclesfield 5

STOURBRIDGE'S love affair with the FA Cup was cruelly shattered by National League leaders Macclesfield, who produced a display of precision finishing to sink the Glassboys without trace.

Stourbridge found themselves facing a mountain to climb after just 12 minutes as Macclesfield went 2-0 up. They took the lead on nine minutes when an Elliott Durrell corner was headed clear by Stourbridge defender Stuart Pierpoint, straight into the path of Danny Whitehead, who let fly with a first-time shot that flew into the net.

Stourbridge responded by storming back upfield and forced a corner, from which Macclesfield goalkeeper Shwan Jalal saved a Jack Duggan header and quickly hoofed the ball downfield where it eventually fell for Tyrone Marsh to fire a fabulous shot into the corner of the net.

The game was effectively over when Macclesfield netted a third goal on the stroke of half-time, Durrell dispatching a delightful shot on the turn. Macclesfield made it 4-0 on 69 minutes via the dangerous Koby Arthur and saved the best for last when Scott Burgess smacked home a spectacular volley on 80 minutes to leave Glassboys goalkeeper Matt Gould hopelessly beaten.

Stourbridge have signed Luke Shearer from No.9 Derby rivals Halesowen Town. The 23-year-old , who can play as a striker or on the wing, has also played for the likes of Hednesford Town and Sporting Khalsa.

Tromans bags a championship place at London Marathon

ATHLETES from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club only had to travel down the road to Birmingham for race action at the weekend in the Birmingham International Marathon.

The club bagged one of it's best ever race positions in an event of this type as Helen Tromans recorded sixth place in the ladies race, second in her age group and 154th overall in a time of 3.11.29. Not quite as fast as her best but good enough to qualify for the Championship start at next year's London Marathon.

Despite a great performance she was unable to claim first back for the club status with Darran Bishop finishing in 134th place in a very respectable 3.09.50. Tom Aston was 417th in 3.28.35, Mark Gatenby finished in 3.28.45 for 422nd, Graham Wildgoose came home in 3.37.18 in 608th. Richard Tonks got back in 4.08.05 at 1691st, Karen Doy in 4.08.05 in 1692nd, Nick Ma in 4.13.35 in 1913th, Lisa Kendrick in 4.15.12 in 1958th and Malcolm Beddall was 2224th in 4.22.22 on his marathon debut.

Later in the half marathon Stuart Perkins finished in 49th place in 1.22.16.

Saddling up to kick off fundraising

High Riders The Riding for the Disabled group

A MARTIAL arts club has kickstarted its fundraising initiative for the year ahead.

Young Gloves Karate boats 350 students at 12 different schools, with classes held in Stourbridge, as well as in Stourport, Kidderminster and Bewdley.

Since forming 15 years ago, the club has helped to raise £56,000 for children's charities. This year's recipient is the High Riders Riding for the Disabled group in Stourport.

The fundraising efforts were launched with the annual awards ceremony, celebrating the achievement of students throughout the year both in competitions and dedication to martial arts in class.

Some £600 was raised on the night, kicking off the bid to match, or beat, last year's total of £6,720.

A charity competition takes place on November 26. To sponsor a trophy or donate a raffle prize, contact Lisa Homer on 07904 913425. All the money raised will go direct to the High Riders.

HAT-TRICK FOR DK'S TREVIS

Camp Hill 29 DK 40

DK visited Camp Hill for the first time in seven years in the league and recorded their fourth win, scoring six tries.

The first half started with Camp Hill kicking a penalty in the second minute to give them a 3-0 lead.

DK then started to dominate and started to stretch the Camp Hill defence. Luke Trevis beat his man and crossed for the first try of the game, seven points after a Sam Vaughan conversion.

Moments later Jordan Brookes fielded a high ball and ran the ball from his own 22 up the slope to the other 22, drew the last defender, only to hear the referee's whistle for a forward pass.

DK increased their lead on 11 minutes when Stef Shillingford was presented with a gap in the Camp Hill defence and took advantage. Vaughan added the extras, 14-3 to DK.

DK added a third try on the half hour, Trevis straight in for his second try and thanks to Vaughan too, DK 21-3 up.

Pressure

Just before half time Camp Hill were awarded a penalty which their stand-off put into the corner with a great kick, and from the resulting line out drove in a try, the half time score was DK 21 Camp Hill 8.

The second half started badly for DK with a prolonged spell of Camp Hill pressure which reduced their lead 21-15.

Danny Hawkins and Vaughan's boot eased the pressure and on 50 minutes DK added their fifth try, when a Nic Adams pass gave Trevis e a free run into the line for his hat-trick, 33-15. On 66 minutes DK struck again when a grubber through the defence allowing Stef Shillingford to touch down, and Sam Vaughan made it five from six on the day and 40-15.

The last 10 minutes saw Ryan Smitheman yellow carded and Camp Hill score two tries to get a bonus point, but DK ran out winners with a five point win. This weekend sees Worcester visit.

Connah's key – Connah Jones leads the attack for Dudley Kingswinford at Camp Hill

Loan boosted Yeltz fall to the leaders

Altrincham 3 Halesowen Tn 0

HALESOWEN Town's mini unbeaten run came to an end against title favourites Altrincham, who went top of the Evo-Stik League Premier Division with this win.

Manager John Hill brought in Marcus Poscha from Ramsbottom and Jordan George Richard from Notts County on loan to replace James Spray and Luke Shearer, who have both left.

Yeltz started well, forcing a series of corners which were headed over or wide. Loanee, John McAtee had a shot on 28 minutes which lacked pace. Ten minutes later, he crossed for Mo Diop, who produced a clever step past a defender but shot wide.

Seconds after the break, Josh Hancock put Altrincham. On 54 minutes, John Johnston made it two from the spot.

Halesowen did try and get back in it, Daniel Udoh seeing his shot on 62 minutes parried by 'keeper Tony Thompson. Oliver Finney saw an effort saved before James Poole wrapped things up on 82 minutes.

Heathens put up a battle as Eagles nick it

IF this was to be Cradley's final league match, they went out with more of a bang than a whimper, despite going down to a 46-43 defeat.

Doubts over available dates at Monmore Green for 2018 have cast a shadow over the Heathens' future. But if the end is looming, what better way would there have been to sign off than by denying visitors Eastbourne a top-of-the-table place?

The Eagles needed victory to finish on the summit – and Cradley almost denied them. In a sport where the ultimate prizes are decided by play-offs, that may not count for too much – Eastbourne, indeed, are already halfway through the grand final and took a 12-point lead to Belle Vue last night (Wednesday) for the decider. But you could see it mattered to the Heathens, despite a windswept night and what looked a lower-than-average attendance.

After a nip-and-tuck night, it all came down to the last heat, with Cradley clinging to a single-point lead.

Skipper Tom Perry, returning from injury, swept to the front and guest Ben Hopwood worked his way into third. But Perry, still struggling with his arm, hit the shale on the pits turn.

Hopwood could not land a blow in the rerun as Eagles pair Jake Knight, who was unbeaten from his five starts, and Josh Bailey closed out the win.

Perry was distraught afterwards, saying: "A rubbish way to end the year."

William in running for future success

A BOARDER at Old Swinford Hospital, Stourbridge, is in the running to become an athlete of the future.

William Kay, aged 14, came fifth in a field of 95 runners in the English Schools Fell Running Championships held in Settle, North Yorkshire. The Year 10 pupil was competing against boys from his own year and the year above and his finishing time of 24:33 was just a couple of minutes behind the overall winner.

He followed it up with a win at the Dudley Schools Cross Country trials, which qualified him to represent Dudley in the West Midlands Cross Country trials at Sutton Park.

★★★

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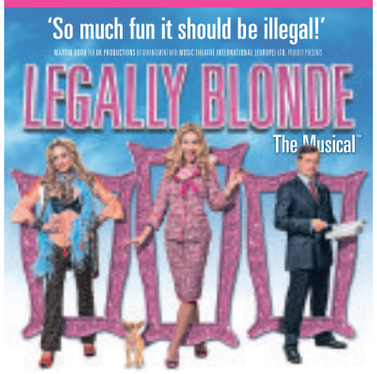

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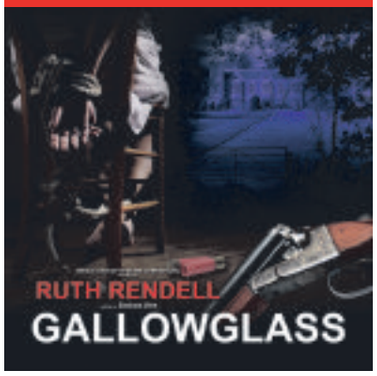

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A VIENNESE STRAUSS GALA

TUE 23 – SAT 27 JANUARY

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SUN 28 – TUE 30 JANUARY

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THU 1 FEBRUARY

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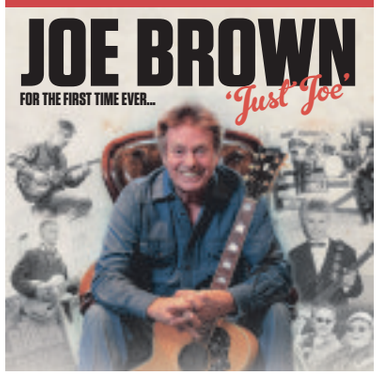
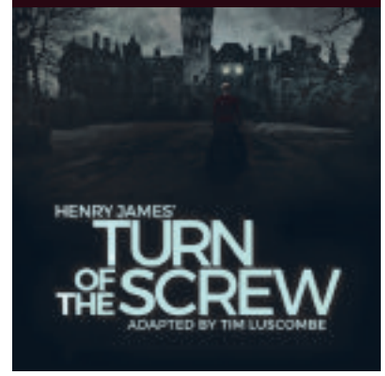


THU 20 MARCH
BRENDAN COLE – ALL NIGHT LONG

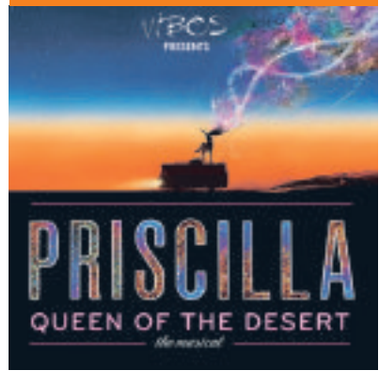
SAT 7 – SUN 8 APR
PEPPA PIG'S ADVENTURE

TUE 10 – SAT 14 APRIL
TURN OF THE SCREW



MON 16 – SAT 21 APRIL
BLOOD BROTHERS

TUE 24 – SAT 28 APRIL
WBOS PRESENT PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT



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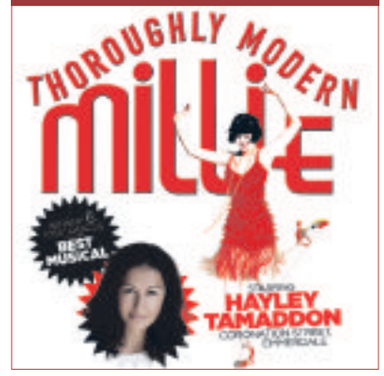
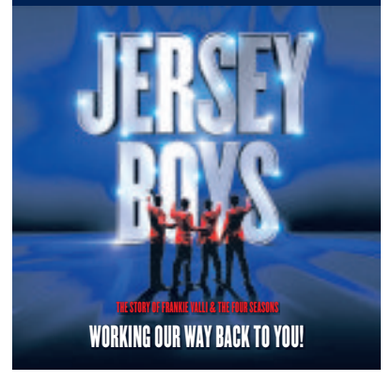


TUE 28 AUG – SAT 8 SEPT
JERSEY BOYS



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